

Ex Dono Authoris - D. P. H.

FAITH and REASON
— Compared ;

Shewing that

DIVINE FAITH

A N D

NATURAL REASON

Proceed from Two different and distinct

PRINCIPLES in MAN.

Against

The NOTIONS and ERRORS

Thomas Of the *Burman*
Modern Rationalists.

Written originally in Latin by a Person of
Quality ; In Answer to Certain THESES
(drawn from Mr. LOCK's Principles)
Concerning *Faith* and *Reason*.

With a New PREFACE concerning
Reason, Philosophy, Morality and Religion.

L O N D O N :

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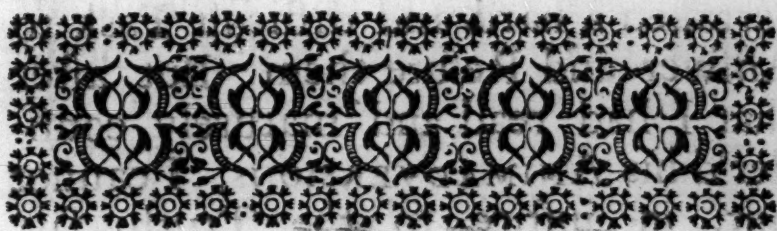


1 TIM. Chap. VI. 20, 21,

O Timothy, Keep that which
is committed to thy Trust, avoiding
profane and vain Babblings, and
Oppositions of Science, falsely so
called: which some professing,
have **ERRED** concerning the
FAITH.



the Part of the RATIONALISTS, I con-
vaid with me to peruse them. When
own Mind in Particular, easily pre-
in order to inform and satisfy my
that such an Inquiry might be of
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Dignity and Importance of the Sub-
ous Person, The great
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Written in



THE PREFACE.



THE following ANIMAD-
VERSIONS having been
Written in *Latin* by a
noble, judicious and pi-
ous Person; The great
Dignity and Importance of the Sub-
jects He treats of; The near and im-
mediate Relation that they have to
the whole Race of Men; and the Use
that such an Enquiry might be of,
in order to inform and satisfy my
own Mind in Particular, easily pre-
vail'd with me to peruse them. When
I first read the THESES laid down on
the Part of the RATIONALISTS, I conf-

feſs, I thought the Author had undertaken a hard and difficult Task to Answer and Reſute them: But after that I had read and maturely conſider'd his ANIMADVERSIONS, I cannot but, in juſtice to the Truth, ſay, That I found the Controverſy ſo fairly Stated, and that he has manag'd the Subject with that Accuracy of Judgment, and with ſuch Strength of Argument, as incomparably exceeds any Thing that I ever ſaw before on the ſame Subject, either in PHILOSOPHY or in DIVINITY.

AND in Particular; I found the Nature and Extent, the Inſufficiency and Uncertainty of *Natural* and *Human* Reason, ſo clearly Determin'd and Demonſtrated; I found the Nature and Properties, the Power and Prerogatives of *Divine* Faith, ſo fairly Deduc'd and Explain'd; I met with ſuch clear and evident Discoveries of the univerſal Degeneracy, Corruption and Miſery of Man; and of the tranſcendent Love, Wiſdom and Goodneſs of GOD; I obſerv'd ſuch
an

The P R E F A C E.

an humble and meek Temper of Mind; such a Spirit of true Piety; and such evident Demonstrations of universal Love and Charity shining every where throughout this little Piece: All these Truths, I say, I observ'd upon the Perusal of the following Papers, with so much Satisfaction and (I hope, I may say) Profit to myself; that I thought it might possibly be of some Service to others likewise, to translate and publish such an excellent Piece in our own Language.

Nothing, surely, can be more deplorable, than to see and observe the Ignorance, the Divisions and the Distractions of Mankind; Nothing can be Matter of greater Concern to all Sober, Serious and Good Men, than to see how universally the World is govern'd and sway'd in their Judgments and Opinions by the most selfish Motives, such as Honour, Interest, Passion, Prejudice, &c. This is what every Body sees and observes, and what all Honest and Good Men justly complain of, and very sincerely la-

ment: But withal 'tis THAT, against which Few, very Few, have hitherto been able to find out, and prescribe any soveraign and Specific Remedy.

Some have had Recourse to the Succours of *Philosophy*; Others have apply'd themselves to the Study of *Morality*: But among Christians, the most approv'd Method, has been to espouse this or that *System of Divinity*. But, alas! how improper and unsuccessful any, or all of these Methods have been to heal our Divisions; to bring us back into the WAY of TRUTH, which can be but ONE; and to unite Mankind in Judgment, and in Heart and Affection, is too too evident from the many Unhappy, and yet still prevailing Divisions and Distractions, not only of the World in General, but even of *Christendom* in Particular, to need any other Demonstration!

This being evidently the Case; the Reader may be inclin'd to ask; Whence come all these Evils? How comes it that Men espouse and maintain

tain such confus'd, such unintelligible and inconsistent Notions and Opinions? How comes it that instead of keeping to the Truth, which is clear and uniform and always consistent with it itself, we are thus bewilder'd in Ignorance and Error? How comes it that *Philosophy* and *Morality*, and even *Religion* itself, are become so weak, confus'd and obscure: that they are neither able to influence and govern our Lives and Actions, nor to illuminate and unite our Hearts and Affections?

These, I readily grant, are very proper and material Questions; and such as deserve all possible regard and consideration. And therefore, in order to give such clear and satisfactory Answers to them, as they deserve, I conceive it necessary to premise, by Way of Introduction, some General, but Short Remarks, upon the Four most material Points, that can possibly come within the Compass of Human Knowledge, *viz. Reason, Philosophy, Morality* and *Religion*, in order

to clear the Way, and to obviate such Difficulties as might otherwise arise upon our Answers: And this I am the more willing to do, because I hope what I have to say, may also help to enable some Readers to peruse the following Treatise itself with more Ease and Satisfaction.

It would be an endless, as well as an useless Labour, to Canvass all the Writings and Opinions of Ancient and Modern Authors on those Heads: I shall therefore take a shorter Way; I shall apply myself to a more Infalible Guide. Instead of running out into the spacious Fields of Learning and *Philosophy*, I shall keep close to the common Road of *Sense* and *Experience*; Instead of being byass'd one Way or other by the uncertain and contradictory Decisions of Moralists and Divines, I shall appeal to the Hearts and Consciences of Men, and to the plain and express Words of Scripture for the Truth of what I have to say.

I. Every

1. Every Man is, and cannot but be conscious to himself, That there is Something in him, which Perceives, Thinks, Reflects and Actuates his whole Body.

2. Whatever it be that is endu'd with those various and admirable Powers and Faculties, it must be a Substance, which we shall call by the Name of the RATIONAL Soul.

3. Seeing the *Rational* Soul is endued with Perception and Reflexion; and seeing the whole Body is sensible throughout, and Perception and Reflexion always and immediately accompanies and follows Sensation; it evidently follows, That the *Rational* Soul is co-extended with, and penetrates and pervades the whole Body.

4. There are commonly reckon'd Five Senses, viz, *Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Smelling* and *Feeling*; and Nothing of all this Visible and Material World can make any Impression, or produce any real Sensation or Perception in the *Rational* Soul, but in and through some one or other of them.

5. Whence all our *Real* and *True* Knowledge of the Things of this *Visible* and *Material* World, must be convey'd to the *Rational Soul*, by the *Means* and *Intervention* of the said *Senses*.

6. So that the *Extent* and *Certainty* of all our *real* and *true* Knowledge of the Things of this *Visible* and *Material* World, must be measur'd by the *Number* and *Accuracy* of our said *Sensations* and *Perceptions*.

7. We find moreover, that the *Rational Soul* is endu'd with a *Power* or *Faculty* of retaining the *Impressions*, *Images* or *Ideas* of all such Things as at any Time are fairly presented to, and act upon the outward *Senses*.

8. We find likewise, That the *Rational Soul* is endu'd with a *Power* of variously *Considering*, *Comparing*, *Compounding*, *Dividing*, *Reflecting* upon, and making *Deductions* from such *Images* and *Ideas*.

9. This is what we call *Ideal* Knowledge; the *Variety*, *Extent* and *Certainty* whereof, is measur'd by the *Variety*

riety of our Sensations and Perceptions; by the Number of Ideas that we retain; by the Conformity which they hold with the Things that they represent; and by the Accuracy that we observe with Regard to all their various and different Relations.

10. Whence 'tis evident, that we can have no true Idea of any Thing, but what we first perceived by some one or other of the Senses. A True it is, we may either by Analogy, Composition, or Division frame to ourselves Ideas of such Things as we never perceiv'd by any of our Senses; but then they are only true, in so far as the Things which we perceiv'd at some other Time, and whose Ideas we make use of, bear an Analogy or Resemblance to that which we would form an Idea of; and as we are dextrous and happy in making a right Composition and Division of such known Ideas. All which renders this Sort of Knowledge extremely precarious and uncertain, and therefore scarce worthy of that Name.

11. Hence

11. Hence it appears, That there is no such Thing as *Innate Ideas*: For Things must first strike and affect the Senses, before they can reach the Soul, (§. 4, 5.); and they must raise and excite Perception therein, before they can imprint their Images or Ideas upon it, (§. 7.).

12. Both our *Real* and *Ideal* Knowledge grows up and improves, as we increase in Years and Experience. So that the more Sensations and Perceptions we have been accustom'd to; and the more Images and Ideas we treasure up and retain; and the more dextrous and skilful we grow in making Reflections, and drawing Inferences from them; the more *Rational*, the more *Learned*, and the *Wiser*, we are esteem'd to be.

13. Upon the whole, it appears, That the *Rational* Soul, is a Substance pervading the whole Human Frame, capable of being moved and affected by outward Objects; and endu'd with a Power or Faculty of retaining their Impressions, Images or Ideas; and

of making Reflexions upon, and drawing Inferences and Conclusions from them, &c.

14. So that if we consider, that we derive all our Knowledge originally from Sense (§. 4.); and that we improve therein by Use and Experience (§. 12.); it appears, that the *Rational Soul* is peculiarly suited and adapted to this *Visible and Material World*.

The Things of this World, are the proper Objects thereof; and in the Enjoyment of them it ought (and would, had not the original Order of Nature been perverted, as we shall see hereafter) to acquiesce and rest satisfy'd. For that which is the proper Object of any Thing, when it is enjoy'd, it must satisfy and content the Thing that coveted and desired it.

15. This seems to be the true Nature of the *Rational, outward*, or (in Scripture Language) *NATURAL MAN*; as appears in Young Persons; and in such People as make it their Business to follow and indulge their Natural Senses and Appetites. All to such Sensations, Perceptions, Ideas, Desires,

Desires and Gratifications, as such, are made, perceived, retained, pursued and enjoyed, without any Regard to *Good or Evil, to Right or Wrong*, otherwise than as they affect and are agreeable or disagreeable to the *Rational Soul* itself.

16. And he that desires, pursues and enjoys such Things; that is, He that makes the Pleasures and Enjoyments of Sense, the Object and the End of all his Desires and Pursuits, may be said to follow the *LAW, Propension (or INSTINCT) of Mere Nature*.

17. That Faculty of the *Rational Soul* which Judges, Considers, Compares, Compounds, Divides, and makes Inferences and Deductions from such Sensations, Perceptions and Ideas, as above-mention'd; and in consequence whereof, and as they appear agreeable or disagreeable to the Soul itself, the Will is solicited and determined to love or hate, to assent or dissent, to seek or fly from any Object, or any Sort of *Real or Ideal* Know-

Knowledge, is what we may properly call NATURAL REASON.

18. All such Sensations, Perceptions and Ideas therefore, as aforesaid, are the proper and immediate Objects of NATURAL REASON: And the Things themselves which raise and excite such Sensations and Perceptions, and which imprint such Ideas upon the Rational Soul, are only in a more improper and remote Sense, the Objects THEREOF.

19. And in this last Sense only, all Natural Learning and Philosophy, all Arts and Sciences, in as much, and in so far as they treat of any Thing that either has been or can be perceived by all or any of the Senses, or represented by sensible Ideas, are the Objects of NATURAL REASON: And in the former, all our Real and Ideal Knowledge of the Things of this World, as such, are the proper and immediate Objects THEREOF; The Extent, Certainty and Usefulness whereof must be determined by §. 6. 9. 12. 16, 17.

20. But if we enter farther
into

into the Recesses of our own Breasts, and make a strict Enquiry there; we cannot but find Something independent of all Corporeal Objects and Ideas whatsoever; Something that likes or dislikes, that approves or condemns our Management, with regard to the World and worldly Things; Something that checks us in our Career, that soures all our Pleasures, and tells us how vain, empty and transitory all our Joy and Satisfaction in them is: We may there perceive, That enjoy what we will outwardly, we are yet ever wanting, and never satisfied; we may there discover an inward Spring, a secret Principle of Truth, a most central and diffusive Sense, an infinite and unsatiable desire of Good.

21. This Inward and Active Principle of Truth; this Central Sense and infinite Desire of Good, is neither produced by, nor dependent upon, nor capable of being filled or satisfied with any Corporeal Object whatsoever. For whatever any Thing can produce,
it

it can also satisfy ; but this, neither any Thing Material or Sensible can fill or satisfy, as the universal Experience of Mankind evidently demonstrates; therefore Nothing of that Nature can produce it ; therefore it is wholly independent of Matter, and of every material Object whatsoever. Nay, even in spite of all that the most wicked and sensual Men can do to the contrary, we find that it will always be uppermost ; that it pricks and accuses, and opposes and condemns their most pleasing Appetites and Desires. Honour, Power, Riches and Pleasures, &c. may for a Time stifle and smother, but they can never totally quench, they can never fill nor satisfy the same. On the contrary, we have many Noble and Illustrious Instances, where in Poverty and Contempt, and under the most grievous Afflictions, the sharpest Pains, and the severest Mortifications, it is easy, serene, triumphant.

22 This inward Principle then, which is neither produced by, nor dependent

dependent upon, nor capable of being fill'd and satisfy'd with any Corporeal Object whatsoever (§. 21.); This Power which presides over, and which moderates and controuls all the Inclinations, Desires and Pursuits of the *Rational Soul*, must be Something really different and distinct from the same. This is what, in common Speech, is call'd CONSCIENCE; in Scripture Phrase, the SPIRIT and the INWARD MAN; and by our Author, the SUPREME SPIRIT. §. 23. The SUPREME SPIRIT is of a much nobler Nature than the *RATIONAL SOUL*. For like an absolute and mighty Monarch, it reigns and governs in some Measure in the Hearts of all Men, from the greatest Prince to the meanest Peasant; it presides over and controuls all the Actions and Desires of the *Rational Soul*; no created Power can influence, by-
 ass or determine the same. And whereas we may observe, That the Desires, Views, Pursuits and Opinions of the *Rational Soul* vary an infinite

nite number of Ways, according to the different Constitutions and Temperaments of Bodies, and according to the several Degrees and Measures of Knowledge and Experience of Particular Persons; we find here on the contrary, That in all Ages, Nations and Persons, there is the same Spring and Principle of Truth; the same indelible and infinite Desire of Good; how much soever they may be mistaken as to Particulars, in taking that for *True* and *Good*, which in Reality is not so: So that all Men in General love *Truth*, and desire *Good*, as such; and pretend to make the one the universal *Rule*, and the other the ultimate *End* of all their Actions.

§ 24. This SUPREME SPIRIT, being endu'd with a most lively Power of Willing, Desiring, Discerning and Judging (§. 23.); nay, seeing we actually perceive, that it Wills, Desires, Discerns and Judges; and that as an Umpire, and even in Contradiction to our Natural Appetites and Desires, and seeing a Thing can neither

their Will, Desire, Discern nor Judge of any Thing but what it knows ; nor know any Thing, but what it first perceives ; nor perceive any Thing, but by some Sense or other ; it evidently follows, That the SUPREME SPIRIT must be endu'd with SENSE OR SENSES.

25. The OBJECTS that upon first View present themselves to the *Senses* of the *Supreme Spirit*, are Truth, Justice, Righteousness, Goodness, &c. We very sensibly feel and perceive the Impressions that such Objects make upon the Spirit ; but they are of such a spiritual and extensive Nature, and the Notions that we have of 'em, so far transcend those that we draw from Material Objects, that we neither know how to express them in Words, nor to represent them, as they are in themselves, by any sensible Ideas ; they are not, they cannot be raised and excited in us by any Corporeal Operation or Impression whatsoever : On the contrary, they are incomparably more quick, lively and powerful than any

Corpo-

Corporeal Sensation : Otherwise, how should it come about that many Men not only deny themselves the Pleasures of Sense, but even chuse to endure the most exquisite Torments, rather than act contrary to those inward Impressions made upon their Minds? The *Objects* than of the *Supreme Spirit*, are in their own Nature *Powerful, Spiritual, Infinite*.

26. As in the Visible and Material World, the *Senses*, the *Desires*, the *Objects* and the *Medium*, are all exactly proportion'd one to another, and finite : So in the *Supreme Spirit*, seeing it is endu'd with an infinite Capacity and Power of Desire ; and seeing the *Objects* themselves are in their own Nature infinite ; it follows that the *Senses* of the *Supreme Spirit* must be capable of infinite Perception, and the *Medium* in and through which it perceives, must be proportion'd both to the *Senses* and to the *Objects* ; that is, it must be something really and totally different and distinct from Matter ; it must be something that's infinite.

27. See-

27. Seeing whatever is Infinite, must Center in GOD, who is the One onely Infinite and Eternal Author and Fountain of all that's Infinite, that is, of all His own Infinite Attributes, Perfections and Emanations; it follows, That GOD is both the OBJECT of the SUPREME SPIRIT, and the MEDIUM whereby He discovers Himself to it, in those Glorious and Essential Rays of his own Divinity; in those His several Infinite and Eternal Attributes, (Perfections and Emanations) of Justice, Righteousness, Goodness and Truth, &c.

28. This infinite Capacity of Perception; this infinite Power of Willing; this infinite Desire of Good, can never be fill'd nor satisfy'd, nor happy in any Thing, but in an adequate, that is, in an Infinite Object, which is GOD.

29. GOD therefore, is the Onely True, Proper, and Adequate Object of the Supreme Spirit; without Him, it can never be fill'd, nor satisfy'd, nor happy; in Enjoying Him it possesses all

all Things; in enjoying Him it is, it cannot but be infinitely, eternally, and compleatly Happy.

30. GOD then acting in and upon the Supreme Spirit of Man, and discovering Himself therein, in his own Eternal and Essential Attributes of Justice, Righteousness, Goodness and Truth, is, *That LIFE which is the LIGHT of Men; That LIGHT which shineth in DARKNESS (the dark and immense Fund of Desire) and the Darkness comprehendeth it not; That TRUE LIGHT which LIGHTETH EVERT MAN that cometh into the World, John ch. i. 4, 5, 9.*

31. These Bright and Glorious Beams and Emanations of the Divinity, darted into, and penetrating and irradiating the dark and immense Fund of the Supreme Spirit, is that Eternal and Essential Light; That Everlasting and Unalterable Law, written and engraven upon the HEARTS of all MEN (§. 20--23.); This, I say, is that *Light*; This is that *Law, whereby the GENTILES, which*
have

have not the (Written or Revealed)

** LAW, do by Nature the*

** Rom. ch. ii. Things contained in the Law :
ver. 14, 15.*

These having not the (Written or Revealed) Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing Witness, and their Thoughts (the very first Impressions or Suggestions which naturally arise and flow from such a divine Irradiation as aforesaid, on the one Part, and the Suggestions and Inclinations of the Animal, Natural or Rational Soul on the other) the mean while accusing or else excusing one another. This is that sure and certain Guide, that upright and infallible Judge; that sacred and unerring Oracle of Truth; in a Word, This is GOD's immediate VICEGE-

*Vid. Prov.
ch. iv. 23. ch.
xx. 27. ch.
xxiii 6.*

RENT, which reigns and presides in, and over the Sons of Men, and in and through which, He declares and manifests his Will and Pleasure to them.

32. This Doctrine of the real Distinction between the *Rational* Soul and *Supreme* Spirit, is not only deducible from what, upon a strict and impartial Examination, we feel and perceive within ourselves; but is perhaps as ancient as most in *Theology*; whether Gentile, Jewish, or Christian. I shall content myself in this Place with the Authority of *St. Paul*, which to all Christians, I hope, will be sufficient; who in express Words mentions this Distinction, *1 Thess. ch. v. 23. And I pray GOD, your whole SPIRIT, and SOUL and BODY be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.* And again, *1 Cor. ch. ii. 14, 15. But the NATURAL MAN receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of GOD;--But the SPIRITUAL (or INWARD, Rom. ch. vii. 22.) MAN, judgeth all Things, yet he himself is judged of no Man.* The same is also evident from *Heb. ch. iv. 12. For the WORD of GOD is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing a-*
a *sunder*

seeder of SOUL and SPIRIT, &c. And that this Spirit, this Spiritual or Inward Man is also the same with the Conscience is evident from, Rom. ch. viii. 26. compared with, Chap. ix. 1. In the first Place, the Apostle declares, That the Spirit itself beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of GOD: And in the other, he explains it thus: I say the Truth in Christ, I lye not, my Conscience also bearing me Witness in the Holy Ghost. And indeed, the whole Tenor of the New Testament, and especially of St. Paul's Epistles, either suppose, or expressly mention this Distinction between the Soul and Spirit. So that upon a careful and impartial Perusal of the Scriptures, it will appear absolutely impossible to interpret and reconcile many Passages relating to the Spiritual Life, without it.

33. Having thus established this real Distinction between the Soul and Spirit; it will enable us to add something farther to what we mention'd, §. 11. and to give an easy and natural Solution to that great Question and Controversy

Controversy about *innate Ideas*, which some have obstinately maintained, and others as stiffly deny'd. For if by *innate Ideas*, those who maintain the Affirmative, mean Ideas previous to any Sensation whatsoever; or, if those who deny innate Ideas, would have it, That all our Knowledge and Ideas whatsoever is derived from, and grounded upon Outward and Corporal Sensations, 'tis certain, that both Opinions are equally false and erroneous. The Truth of the Matter then, is this; The Soul being adapted to the Material and Visible World, can have no Knowledge of any Thing relating thereto, but what it derives some how or other, either mediately or immediately from the outward Senses (§. 11. 14.); and the Spirit being the proper Subject of all divine Operations, can neither know nor act in any wise, but as it is illuminated and enabled by the divine Light so to do (§. 20---31): As the Soul can have no true Notion or Idea of Colours, but what it receives by the Impressions made upon the

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Eye,

Iye, by the means of Light; so neither can the Spirit of Man form any Notions of Good or Evil, &c. but by the Help of the divine Light alone acting in and upon the same. Those then who maintain, That all our Knowledge is deriv'd from Sense, are so far in the Right: But in Limiting and Restraining the same to the outward Senses only; in that they are mistaken: And on the other Side, those who say, That some Part of our Knowledge is such, as can in no wise be derived from any Impressions made upon the outward Senses, are certainly so far in the Right too: But to imagine, that we should find such Knowledge implanted and springing up in us without any previous Sensations at all, is a great (tho' a much more harmless) Mistake on their Part, arising from their Ignorance of this, That there are inward as well as outward Senses.

34. As therefore the wise and Learned Men of the World, are very diligent and careful to make as many
and

and as accurate Observations, as possibly they can, in order to build upon, and to extend and improve Natural Knowledge (§. 12.); so is it likewise the Duty of every One that sincerely desires to be enlightened with the Beams of Divine Truth, and to improve in Spiritual Knowledge and Understanding, to listen to, and to cherish those inward and secret Touches and Sollicitations, those kind and gentle Dictates and Inspirations, which more and more draw and incline us to think of, to consider and to desire Things Inward, Divine and Immortal; which solicit us to do Things that are good, true and just; which sometimes, when we do not think of it, and even against our Wills, affect and imprint upon us a deep Sense of our own Impotence, Vanity and Nothingness, and of the Obligations that we lie under to depress and humble ourselves; which invite us to acknowledge, love, worship and praise the Powerful, Good, Wise and Just Author of our Being, and of all other Things.

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Things; To supplicate his Help; to follow and please Him; and finally, to do what in us lies to persuade others to do the like, &c. Every One, I say, that sincerely desires to have his Mind irradiated with true Light, and to improve in spiritual Knowledge, must before all Things, before and without all Ratiocination and artificial Ideas, receive and cherish those inward Motions, Sensations and Suggestions; 'Tis absolutely necessary, that he cultivate and follow them with all possible Veneration and Observance. For, they are the true Characters and the lively Prints of the Finger of GOD; they are so many real Sparks of Divine Light; they are the Dawnings of Faith and divine Knowledge, from which Reason at self ought to take its Notions, Judgments and Ratiocinations; they are the true τὸ πρῶτον τοῦ Θεοῦ, which is manifest in all Men, φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν ἀνθρώποις; They are, what we may be allow'd to call, the true *Innate Principles* manifested by GOD Himself in all Men,

35. It being evident then, That there
 is in Man two real and distinct Think-
 ing POWERS or Principles, *viz.* One
 suited and adapted to the Visible and
 Material World, and the other pro-
 per and peculiar to GOD alone (§.
 2. 22. 32.) ; and it being likewise
 evident, That by Nature, this last is
 superior to, and appointed to preside
 and rule over the former (§. 23.) ; and
 it being yet farther evident, That at
 present the Generality, or rather that
 all Men, notwithstanding this natu-
 ral Superiority and Pre-eminence, in-
 stead of obeying the Dictates and Com-
 mands of this their natural and law-
 ful Lord and Governor, rebel against
 the same, and follow and pursue the
 Bent of their own inferior Appetites
 and Desires, and thereby run into
 all Sorts of Irregularities and Confu-
 sions ; it undeniably follows, That
 Man is at present corrupted and dege-
 nerated ; and that the Rights of Sove-
 raignty, and the Duties of Subjection
 between those two Powers are misera-
 bly

bly perverted, confounded and enervated.

36. GOD being infinitely Perfect, is the onely Eternal and Sovereign BEING (otherwise He could not be infinitely Perfect) from Whom all Creatures and all Beings whatsoever, derive their Existence. He is therefore the AUTHOR and the CREATOR of MAN.

37. And seeing Nothing Imperfect, disorder'd or confus'd, can possibly proceed from GOD, who is infinite Perfection itself: it follows, That He made Man *Perfect* and *Upright*.

38. Seeing then, that GOD is the Creator of Man; and that He made Him perfect and upright; Seeing GOD cannot be the Author of any Imperfection, Disorder or Confusion (§. 36, 37.); and seeing Man is at present liable to, and guilty of many Corruptions and Disorders (§. 35.): it evidently follows, That GOD neither is nor can be the Author or Contriver of this our present State; 'tis manifest, that we are all fallen and degenerated from

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from that perfect and upright State, wherein we were at first created.

39. The Gentile World; such of 'em, I mean, as resign'd themselves most to the Guidance of that eternal and essential Light; and to the Dictates of that everlasting and unalterable Law, which they found written and engraven in their Hearts (6. 31. 34.), perceiving the great and universal Degeneracy and Confusion, and the irregular and contradictory Pursuits, Views and Inclinations of Men; but being withal either wholly ignorant, or at least not sufficiently advert- ing to the real and essential Distinction between the *Supreme Spirit* and the *Rational Soul*; they mingled and confounded the *Powers*, the *Faculties* and the *Objects* of both together; they limited and joyn'd Universal, Eternal and Naked Truths (such as Justice, Righteousness, Goodness, &c.) to finite, transitory and sensible Ideas; They converted the divine Irradiations of GOD in and upon the *Supreme Spirit*, almost wholly towards the Creatures;

They mingled and confounded them with the inferior Light of Natural Reason; They scarcely consider'd them in any other View, but as they serv'd to moderate the Passions, and to promote and secure the Temporal Happiness of the *Natural* Man.

40. Upon these complex and confus'd Principles and Ideas, the GENTILE MORALISTS fram'd all their SCHEMES of MORALITY: Upon them they built all their *Political* Institutions; all their *OEconomical* Doctrines; all their other Rules and Precepts relating to the better Government of Mankind. From the Mixture, I say, of the two above-mentioned Principles, (§. 39.) arises all the GENTILE MORALITY: And according to the Predominancy of one or other of 'em, the SCHEMES which they fram'd; and the PRECEPTS which they deliver'd were more confus'd and more clouded with Error, or more distinct and more nearly allied to Truth.

41. The Application of those Universal,

versal, Eternal and Naked Truths, to finite, corporeal and sensible Objects and Ideas; Or, in other Words, *Natural* Reason, irradiated, enlightened and determin'd by those bright, powerful and glorious Beams of divine Light, is what may properly be call'd HUMAN or MORAL REASON.

42. And the several particular *Rules* and *Laws*, which arise and flow from such an Irradiation and Composition, as they regard and terminate in the Preservation and Happiness of the *Rational* or *Natural* Man, is what may properly be call'd the LAWS of NATURE.

43. So that the Laws of Nature, are either *purely Natural*, (§. 16.) and such as do not oblige a Man always to act up to them; or they are *Moral*, (§. 42.) and such as lay an eternal and indispensable Obligation upon all Men always and upon all Occasions to live up to them: Thus Self-preservation against all the Rest of the World besides, and the Natural Inclinations that all Men have to gratify their several Sensual
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Appetites and Desires, flow from the Law of Instinct of *mere* Nature; but to suffer patiently and willingly for the Good of the Society whereof we are Members; To do to others as we would be done by: and consequently, to do all the Good that we can to others, and to moderate or deny our own Natural Inclinations and Pursuits, in so far as they may tend to the Prejudice of our Neighbour, are Moral Duties flowing from that Irradiation and Composition last mention'd: The first Sort may, and ought to be upon many Occasions either moderated and restrain'd, or wholly deny'd and superseded; The other lays an eternal, universal and indispensible Obligation upon all Men; 'Tis that which truly and properly deserves the Name of the *Law of Nature*. But tho' there be such a wide and mighty Difference as to the Obligation of those several *Laws*; yet 'tis observable, That SELF, and the Preservation and Happiness thereof, is the sole Object and End of both.

44. But as the Moralists of the World always grounded their Precepts and Doctrines upon such mixt, and consequently, erroneous Principles; And as the End which they principally propos'd to Themselves, was only temporal and sensible Happiness, which can never fill nor satisfy the infinite Capacities and Desires of Men; so we find, That all that they could ever say or write, has hitherto prov'd too precarious and insufficient to produce any considerable Reformation or Amendment in the World: We find that they could never arrive at the Truth itself; nor positively determine wherein the original and compleat Perfection and Happiness of Man does consist; nor clearly discover the true and only Way that we must take, in order to recover Them again.

45. Man then being sunk into such a miserable and deplorable State; Man being notwithstanding still endu'd with an infinite and unfatiable Desire of Good; that is, of Perfection and Happiness; Man being, as we have
seen,

seen, utterly unable of himself to find out either wherein his true Perfection and Happiness consists, or how, or by what Means to attain and recover them again: Nothing less than the Infinite GOODNESS and MERCY of GOD could grant NEW and EXTRAORDINARY Lights and Assistances; Nothing but such New and Extraordinary Lights and Revelations, such divine and powerful Assistances and Effusions of Spirit, could ever discover to him wherein his true Perfection and Happiness does consist, and how and by what Means he may, and ought to endeavour to recover them again.

46. These Extraordinary REVELATIONS and DISCOVERIES, which teach us wherein our true Perfection and Happiness does consist, and how and by what Means, we may, and ought to endeavour to recover and enjoy them again, is, what we commonly call RELIGION.

47. The CHRISTIAN RELIGION, is taught and contain'd in the Canon of

of the Scripture; (but more particularly in that Part of it call'd the *NEW TESTAMENT*;) so that if we impartially consider what has been said, and carefully Examine those Sacred Books, it will evidently appear, That the Sum and Substance of all true Religion is This: That GOD created Man, and all other Things whatsoever, perfect and upright in their Kind; That He endu'd Man with a *Rational* SOUL to govern and preside over the Body, and suited and adapted to this Visible and Material World; and with a SUPREME SPIRIT endu'd with Senses, Powers and Capacities suited and adapted to, and only capable of being fill'd and satisfy'd in and with GOD alone, and in his infinite *Attributes, Emanations and Perfections*; That both the *Rational* SOUL and the *Supreme* SPIRIT were each endu'd with Perfect LIBERTY, and with a FREE WILL; That the *Supreme* SPIRIT was originally appointed to preside over, and to govern the *Rational* SOUL, and all its Powers and Faculties, as being
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by Nature superiour thereto; That the *Supreme SPIRIT* was originally subject to, and only and immediately dependent upon *GOD* alone; That the *PERFECTION* of Man consisted in a perfect, compleat, and most intimate *UNION* of the *WILL* of the *Supreme SPIRIT* with the *WILL* of *GOD*; and of the *WILL* of the *Rational Soul* with *That* of the *Supreme Spirit*; That the true, essential, and compleat *HAPPINESS* of *MAN* consists in the full and free Enjoyment of *GOD* in the *Supreme Spirit*, Who is the only proper and adequate Object thereof, and Who is alone able to fill and satisfy all its boundless and infinite Capacities, Powers, Faculties and Desires; That Man most basely abus'd that most excellent and most divine Gift of *LIBERTY*, wherewith *GOD* endu'd him; That thereupon he withdrew his Dependence, his Heart and Affections, and separated and turn'd away his *WILL* and all the other Powers and Faculties of his *SPIRIT*, from *GOD*, its only proper and adequate Object; That upon this, the
Rational

Rational Soul rebel'd against its Lawful Lord and Governor, rejected and despised the Dictates and Commands thereof, and gave itself up almost entirely to the irregular and sinful Conduct of its own Carnal Affections and Desires; That from thenceforward the Wills and other Powers and Faculties of the *Supreme Spirit* and *Rational* Soul were mix'd and blended together; SIN entred into the World; and NATURE itself fell into Disorder and Confusion; That no sooner had Man deserted his GOD, turn'd his Affections to the Creatures, and plung'd himself into such an Abyss of Misery, but that the same most MERCIFUL, and infinitely GOOD and WISE GOD, in and through the MERITS and MEDIATION of his onely begotten SON, contriv'd and promis'd to rescue and deliver him from that Bondage and Slavery which he had thus unhappily fallen into; That for this End, He rais'd up many Messengers and Prophets, and by them communicated to the World such Revelations and Discoveries,

coveries, as He in his infinite Wisdom saw most proper and convenient; and lastly, That He sent JESUS CHRIST His Onely SON, and our most Blessed REDEEMER, to finish the great Work of our REDEMPTION; and that He again Authorized His *Apostles* to teach and instruct us wherein our true PERFECTION and HAPPINESS does consist, and to shew by their LIVES and DOCTRINE, how and by what Means we may be enabled to recover and enjoy them again.

48. This then is the END and DESIGN of all REVELATION and RELIGION, even our PERFECTION and HAPPINESS: To this End CHRIST our LORD became our MEDIATOR and INTERCESSOR with his FATHER; He undertook the REDEMPTION of lost Sinners; He has procur'd NEW TREASURES and SUPPLIES of GRACE and STRENGTH for us: And if We will but open our Hearts, and sincerely Co-operate therewith; if we will but TAKE UP OUR CROSS, DENY OURSELVES and FOLLOW HIM,
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He has promis'd, and He cannot deceive us, That we shall be made PERFECT, even as our Heavenly FATHER is PERFECT; and that we shall be made infinitely, eternally and compleatly HAPPY.

49. Hence 'tis evident, That the *Primitive* and *Original* LAW of NATURE establish'd by GOD, not only in the Right of Creation, Redemption and Preservation, but even in Regard also of our own compleat Perfection and Happiness, is, to LOVE GOD; that is, To turn the *Supreme* Spirit, and all its Powers and Faculties to GOD its only True and Adequate Object; to depend upon, to submit, to resign, and finally, to unite its own Will to His Will in all Things. This LOVE of GOD, which consists in an absolute Resignation and most intimate Union of the Will of the *Supreme* Spirit to, and with that of GOD, is the first and the last, the One onely eternal, essential and everlasting LAW of NATURE. In pursuing and endeavouring to live up to this LAW, the

Supreme

Supreme Spirit finds the highest Satisfaction and Delight; in this Conformity and Union of Wills, consists its true Perfection; and from Perseverance and an inviolable Observance thereof, will flow all its Happiness, throughout all the Ages of Eternity.

§ 50. Hence also we may observe, That the LAW of NATURE, with Respect to its Object and End, is twofold; that is, That it ought to be considered, either as it regards the *Rational* or *Natural* Man in a Degenerate State (§. 16. 42, 43.); Or, as it respects the *Supreme* Spirit or Inward Man, in or aspiring after a State of Perfection and Happiness (§. 49.): In the first Sense, SELF or the *Natural* Man, is the only CENTER and OBJECT of all our Cares and Concerns; and we consider the *Ordinary* Irradiations of GOD in and upon the *Supreme* Spirit scarce any otherwise, but as they are subservient to the Temporal Happiness and Preservation thereof: But in the *other* Sense, GOD Himself is both the CENTER and the

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the OBJECT of the *Supreme* Spirit, whereupon out of His superabundant Grace and Goodness, He enables it to reduce the *Rational* or *Natural* Man to its original Subjection and Dependence, and to raise and advance the whole Human Nature to that Perfection and Happiness from which it is fallen. In the *first* sense, we move in excentric Circles, whereof every One is a Center to himself, and all the Union and Harmony that is between such irregular Orbs, is wholly deriv'd from the common and ordinary Influences of GOD scatter'd and diffus'd over the whole System (§. 30, 31.); But in the *other*, we endeavour to recover our primitive and most desirable Regularity; to drown and lose our own little excentric Orbes in the Divine Immenfity; and to resign ourselves wholly to be moved, acted and determined by the SUN of Righteousness Himself, the Eternal and Ever-blessed CENTER of all Things.

51. But to be more Particular: Such and so great is the Degeneracy of

of Mankind, and so industrious have some been, not only to bring down the Divine Law to the same level with the Moral; but even to confound this last, with that Part which is purely Natural; that in order to set this Matter in the clearest Light, we may now take the Liberty to distinguish the Law of Nature, into *Natural*, *Moral* and *Divine*. When we are solely governed by the *first*, we pursue all our Natural Inclinations and Desires (§. 16.) and do what in us lies to extinguish the Divine Light in our Hearts: By the *second*, we yield ourselves up to, and make use of the divine Light in order to moderate our natural Passions and Appetites, in so far as we think it will conduce to promote our own Happiness, and the Tranquillity of the World (§. 42, 43.); But by the *last* we totally conquer and subdue all our said Appetites and Passions, and neither Will nor Desire any Thing of, or for ourselves, but are wholly and absolutely resign'd to be acted and guided by the Will of GOD in all Things

Things (§. 49.). In living according to the Laws of *mere* Nature, we set ourselves on a Level with the Beasts; By observing the *Moral* Laws of Nature, we perform the Part of Men, and of good Citizens; And in resigning ourselves to be govern'd by the *Divine* Law of Nature, we act like Christians, and shall in the End be advanc'd to Fellowship and Society with the blessed Angels themselves.

52. That new and extraordinary Manifestation of GOD in the *Supreme* Spirit of every true and sincere Christian; That divine and essential Communication of new Light, Life and Love darted into the *Supreme* Spirit; that is, CHRIST Himself who is the *Life* and the *Light* of Men; CHRIST *living* and *dwelling* in us; CHRIST in us the *Hope* of Glory, is the first Principle, the Worker and the Finisher of our Salvation. CHRIST, I say, is that New and Living Principle, that Powerful and All-sufficient Agent, who by a real but ineffable Communication of His own Divine and Essential

tial *Light*, enables the *Supreme Spirit* to see its own present miserable and wretched Condition, and restores the whole Man, *Spirit, Soul and Body*, to their original and primitive State of Perfection and Happiness; and that *LIGHT*, is what in one Sense, and as it is the Gift of *GOD*, is call'd *DIVINE FAITH*.

53. As that Faculty therefore of the *Rational Soul*, or that *Light* whereby we perceive and judge, &c. of Corporeal Objects and their Ideas, is call'd *NATURAL REASON* (§. 17.); and as *Natural Reason* influenc'd and determin'd by the ordinary Irradiations of *Divine Light*, with Regard to the better Conduct of the Natural Man, is what we call *HUMAN or MORAL REASON* (§. 41.); so that Faculty or Power of the *Supreme Spirit*, or rather that New and Extraordinary Communication of *Divine Light*, whereby the *Supreme Spirit* is enabled to see and perceive *Divine Truths* as they are in Themselves, abstracted from all sensible and Material Objects
and

and Ideas whatsoever, and to recover its own original Righteousness and Happiness, is call'd DIVINE FAITH.

54. Hence we plainly see the Difference between PHILOSOPHY, MORALITY and RELIGION. In *Philosophy*, *Natural* Reason is our Guide, and all material Things, and sensible Ideas, are the Objects thereof (§. 18, 19.): In *Morality*, we consider the *Supreme* Spirit and the *Rational* Soul, as one and the same Thing; We mix and confound the ordinary Manifestations of GOD in the One, with the Light of *natural* Reason in the other; and our first and principle Aim and Design is to moderate the Passions and to consult the temporal Happiness of the Rational or Natural Man (§. 39--44.): But *Religion* superadds new Lights and Assistances; it distinguishes between the superior and inferior Powers whereof we are composed; it teaches us wherein our true Perfection and Happiness does consist, and how, and by what Means we may again become perfect and
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happy in *Spirit, Soul and Body*, as GOD at first created us (§. 47---52.).

55. From these Principles we may discover the Difference between HISTORICAL and DIVINE FAITH, and between the *moral* Certainty of the One, and the Divine *infallible* Evidence of the other. HISTORICAL FAITH is founded upon *Humane* Reason, and consequently is an Act of the *Rational* Soul influenc'd and determin'd by the ordinary Irradiations of Divine Truth (§. 41.), whereby it assents and believes, for Instance, That CHRIST liv'd in such an Age of the World; That He did such Miracles, and was the Author of such Doctrines as are recorded of Him; and the *Certainty and Evidence* of this Sort of *Faith*, is *moral* only; that is, it depends solely upon the Opinion that we have of the Sincerity, Veracity, &c. of CHRIST himself, and of those that were Witnesses, and that first receiv'd his Doctrines from Himself, and afterwards handed them down to us from Age to Age: But DIVINE FAITH (§. 52.)

(§. 52.) is that new and living Principle, that divine and essential Light communicated to, and implanted in the *Supreme* Spirit of a Christian, whereby it clearly and distinctly sees and feels those Divine Truths and Doctrines, as they are in Themselves, and the natural Congruity between Them and its own Faculties; and in Consequence whereof, it cannot but assent to and cherish them, and endeavour to live up to them, and hunger and thirst more and more after them, as its natural Food and Nourishment, and as the only sure and certain Means of Promoting its own Perfection and Happiness. The one is in a manner wholly External; the other is altogether inward: The one represents the Doctrines of CHRIST as hard and burdensome, as foreign and opposite to Flesh and Blood, or the *Natural* Man; the other represents them as pleasant and easy, as natural and congenial to the *Inward* Man or *Supreme* Spirit; The one is, as I may say, a dry, barren and ideal Knowledge,

and liable to many Uncertainties, Doubts and Difficulties; the other imprints a living, clear and satisfactory Conviction upon the Heart, and is always accompany'd with such divine Power and Efficacy, as displays itself in the purest Acts of Love towards GOD, of Charity towards all Men, and in every other good Work: The one is like the Relation of a Traveller; the other is Vision and Experience itself: The last so far transcends the former, that CHRIST Himself instead of appealing to *moral Evidence*, expressly tells us, *If any Man will do the Will* (§. 34,) *of Him that sent Him, he shall KNOW of the DOCTRINE, whether it be of GOD, or whether He spake of Himself,* John. ch. vii. 17.

56. But tho' DIVINE FAITH be infinitely preferable to HISTORICAL; yet I would not be understood as if I undervalu'd the *latter*; or meanly esteem'd the *Moral Certainty* and Evidence that we have for the same: By no Means. *Historical Faith*, and the *moral Evidence* that 'tis ground'd upon,

is that whereby we have the External Word handed down to us; it very justly challenges our most serious Regard and Consideration; and he that allows it its due Weight and Authority, make a fair Step towards being a Christian: But it is only *Divine Faith* that opens and illuminates the Heart and the Mind, and that carries *infallible* and *irresistible* Evidence and Conviction with it. All therefore that I aim at, is only to shew, how grossely they are mistaken who think, That a Christian has Nothing but *moral* Certainty and Evidence, whereupon to ground his Belief.

57. From what has been said, we may likewise discover the true Springs of all the Difficulties and Disputes about GRACE, which have so long, and so much divided and distracted the Christian World, *viz.* 1. Because Divines instead of distinguishing rightly between those two Powers or Principles whereof we are compos'd, as they ought to have done, have mixed and confounded them one with ano-

ther. 2. Because that in all their Enquiries about GRACE, they have consider'd Man in a State independent (as I may say) of his Creator; that is, they have rejected the true Notion of an immediate Concurrence, and of a real and continual Influx of divine Light and Power in and upon the Spirit of Man; and instead thereof have suppos'd, That GOD at the Creation, endu'd him not only with Powers and Faculties, but also with all other Requisites, whereby to govern himself and all his Actions to their proper Ends by their own natural Power and Strength. 3. Because they have supposed, That Man by his own natural Strength can perform Actions *morally* Good. 4. Because they have consider'd *moral* Goodness, or that Power whereby we are enabled to perform Actions *morally* Good, and *Divine* Grace, not as *Degrees* of the same Light, but as two different and distinct Lights. 5. Because they have looked upon Grace, even in the strictest and most divine Sense of the Word,

not

not as Something truly divine, and yet essentially requir'd in order to make Men Happy (as Light truly flows from the Sun, and yet is indispensably requir'd by the Eye in order to Sight) but only as a new Mode, Quality, Habit or Light, (such as is that which arises from any particular Branch of acquir'd natural Knowledge with regard to the *Rational Soul*;) superadded to what we had before, and therefore conferr'd only upon particular Persons at certain Times and Seasons: Or more plainly, They have look'd upon Grace, not as Something essentially requir'd in order to make a Man happy *in all States whatsoever*; but rather as Something without which Man in a State of Innocence might have been compleatly happy, and may be so still in some Measure, even in this Life. 6. Because that upon these, and such-like Principles and Notions, they have found it extremely difficult, if not utterly impossible to reconcile the *Origine and Operations* of DIVINE GRACE,

with the *Liberty* and *Independency* of
MAN'S WILL.

58. On the other Hand; If we
duely consider what has been already
said, we may easily set the whole
Matter in a very clear and satisfacto-
ry Light: For if we consider the
Matter aright and without Prejudice,
it evidently appears; 1. That the
Supreme Spirit has an indelible and in-
finite Desire of Good. 2. That as in
the *Natural* Man, so in the *Supreme*
Spirit, *Perception* and *Volition*, are two
different and distinct Powers; and
that the former, as such, does not in any
Wise necessarily determine the latter.
3. That GOD and His divine Light
is the only proper and adequate Object
of the *Supreme* Spirit. 4. That the
just and natural Consequence of Man's
Sin and Rebellion against GOD, was,
That his Sins separated, and became
as a thick Cloud between him and his
GOD; whereupon, could not but en-
sue in the *Supreme* Spirit an Eclipse of
all manner of divine Light. 5. That
no sooner had Man plung'd himself
into

into this Abyſs of Darkneſs and Miſery, but that JESUS CHRIST, the Eternal WORD, became our Mediator and Interceſſor with his FATHER; who thereupon, and in and through the Merits and Mediation of His Onely Beloved Son, was pleas'd to allow unto all Men, notwithstanding what had happen'd, Grace and Time to repent and turn unto him again; that is to ſay, GOD in and through the Merits and Mediation of JESUS CHRIST, does yet notwithstanding of Man's Sin and Rebellion, pour into the Hearts of all Men (§.30.) The Influences of divine Light; like the riſing Sun in a dark and gloomy Morning, he breaks through the the thickeſt Clouds of Ignorance and Error, and darts many bright and glorious Beams of divine Light into the Supreme Spirit of every Creature; *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and on the Good*; and this is what is call'd PREVENTING GRACE. 6. That Man is at preſent placed in a Middle or probationary State, he has *Life and*
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Death

Death set before him; he is solicited on one Side by his carnal Appetites and Desires, and on the other by the pure and divine Influences of GOD in the *Supreme Spirit*: By those he is tempted to stoop to sensual and transitory Pleasures; by these he is animated and inspir'd with noble and generous Desires after spiritual and eternal Joys: The first inclines him to sit down contented in the Enjoyment of the Creature; the other assures him, that there is no true Happiness nor Satisfaction, but only in the Creator.

7. That 'tis in our own Power, which of those two Principles we will suffer ourselves to be govern'd by. 8. That in order to determine which to embrace, or which to suffer ourselves to be govern'd by, we ought diligently to reflect upon, and to compare the *Objects* of the *Supreme Spirit* and *Natural Soul* one with another; We ought impartially to consider and to enquire into the Nature of such different and contrary Perceptions, and to approve and cherish such only as we find most agreeable,

agreeable, permanent and satisfactory.

9. That for Want of such a strict and impartial Enquiry, the Generality of Men, since the Fall of *Adam*, have given themselves up almost wholly to the Conduct and Government of the *Natural* Man, to fulfil the Lusts and Desires thereof. 10. That seeing every Man has an infinite and innate Desire of Good; That Nothing but an infinite Good can fully satisfy and content the same; That Nothing can be infinitely Good but GOD alone; and consequently, that Nothing but GOD alone can fully satisfy and content the infinite Capacity and Desire of Man; 'Tis evident to a Demonstration, that Man ought to make it the Principal, the only Business of his Life to study how and by what Means, and to do what in him lies, to enjoy GOD. 11. That seeing there is no other Way of coming to the Enjoyment of GOD but by becoming obedient either to the Solicitations of Sense on one Hand, or to the Influences of divine Light on the other: And seeing the former cannot,

cannot, it evidently follows, That we ought to resign ourselves to the Guidance and Direction of the Latter; that is, If we fairly consider the Sollicitations of Sense on one Side, and the divine Influences of GOD on the other; and that the former, instead of forwarding, really hinders and obstructs our Union with GOD; it follows, That we ought, that we have the strongest Motives and Obligations that can be, to persuade us, to resolve and determine to submit and resign ourselves to be guided and govern'd by the Latter. 12. That GRACE or the Operation of divine Light in and upon the *Supreme* Spirit, does not, properly speaking, directly and immediately determine the Will; nor yet does the Will in any Wise determine to embrace or will any Thing that's good, before divine Grace presents itself and operates in and upon the *Supreme* Spirit: 'Tis that radical and infinite Desire of Good, or, to speak more properly, 'tis that innate and central Tendency (that centripetal *Vis* or Power,

Power, to borrow an Expression, which I conceive, I may as properly use with Relation to the Spiritual, as others do with Regard to the material Worlds) of the *Supreme* Spirit, to its proper Center and Object, GOD the Supreme Good, which sets all the Powers of Man at Work; and 'tis an inward Consciousness of the Excellency of Divine Light and Truth, and of the natural Congruity and Aptitude that they have to make us acceptable to, and to bring us to a closer Union with GOD, without Whom, we cannot but plainly perceive (if we do but a little consider and reflect upon the Nature of our own Faculties) that we can never be truly Happy, That determines the Will to submit and resign itself to be govern'd and illuminated by the divine Light: But of this a Man could never be a Judge, did not the divine Light, or the Grace of GOD first present itself and operate in him. 13. That upon a Man's willing, determining and resolving in all Sincerity and Humility,

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to resign himself to be govern'd by the divine Influences of GOD in and upon the *Supreme* Spirit; GOD, on the other Side, out of His Infinite Love and Goodness to Mankind, and in and through the alone Merits and continual Intercession of JESUS CHRIST our Blessed LORD and REDEEMER, communicates new and extraordinary Measures of divine Light to such a Person; which is what inspir'd Writers in a more particular and limited Sense, mean by the Word GRACE. So that GRACE in this Sense, and FAITH as described above, are but two Words signifying one and the same Thing. 14. That this new and extraordinary Communication of divine *Grace* and *Faith*, is so diffusive and powerful, that it effectually enables the *Supreme* Spirit to mortify and subdue all the irregular Inclinations and Desires of the natural Man; it consumes and annihilates every Thing that crosses, hinders, or in any wise opposes the divine Operations in the Spirit. 15. That as to
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the Great Work of Salvation, Man is with regard to the *Supreme Spirit* in a Manner wholly passive; all that he can do with Regard to that, is only upon such an inward Consciousness and Reflexion as I have just now mentioned (§, 12.), to submit and resign the *Supreme Spirit* to be irradiated, acted upon, and govern'd by the new and extraordinary Influences of divine Grace, *That GOD may Work therein both to will and to do of his good Pleasure*; and all that Man Co-operates therewith, is only in and through the Power and Strength thereof, to mortify and subdue the natural Man with all its disorderly Lusts and Affections, and by that Means to do all that in him lies *to work out his own Salvation*.

16. That wheresoever DIVINE GRACE dwells and reigns, it always produces good Works; such as *Love, Charity, Meekness, Humility, &c.* So that instead of meriting Grace and Favour of GOD by our good Works, 'tis evident, that we cannot so much as do the least good Thing, no, nor thin ka
good

good Thought, but by the Help and Assistance of Divine Grace: The *Supreme* Spirit may be compar'd to a Tree, whose Center and Root is fix'd and planted in GOD; from Him it derives and sucks in all its Sap and Nourishment, all the Influences and Irradiations of Divine Light; and according as it is surrounded and cramped with the Love of this World, or warm'd and cherish'd by the Love of GOD, it comes to be overgrown and choak'd with the Briars and Thorns of Sin and Wickedness; Or, it grows up and thrives, and produces all the goodly Fruits of *Love and Charity*, and every other good Work.

59. Now from all that has been said, we may discover the Source and the Spring of all the Immorality, Heresy and Infidelity; of all the Errors, Divisions and Distractions which ever have been, and still are so plentifully and so successfully broach'd and propagated in the World, *viz.* Because we have forsaken GOD the Father of TRUTH, and the Foun-
tain

tain of living Waters, and hewen out to ourselves broken Cisterns that can hold no Water; Because we have withdrawn our Dependance, our Wills, our Hearts and Affections from Him who is the Father of our Spirits; and in Whom we live, move and have our Being; Because we have forsaken Him who is the Light, the Life, the Strength, the Way, the ultimate End, and the only Eternal and most Profound Center of all Things; Because we have sacrific'd whatever was his, in the right of Creation, Redemption and Preservation, to every strange and senseless Idol, to every vain and perishable Pleasure, to every wild and extravagant Passion; Because we, poor weak Creatures, have not only most presumptuously rebelled against GOD, our Natural, our Rightful, our Lawful Sovereign, and endeavour'd to set ourselves up as so many absolute and independent Beings; but have also most unworthily suffer'd CORRUPTED REASON to usurp that Throne, and to sway that Scepter, which none can fill, none can manage,

manage, but Infinite Majesty alone. In short, the *SPRING* of all the above-mention'd Evils, is this; That instead of turning and offering up our *Supreme* Spirit with all its Powers and Faculties wholly to *GOD*, to love, praise and worship Him; to be filled with the pure and undefiled Waters of his *Truth*; and to be endu'd with Light, Grace and Strength, whereby to see the Beauty and Harmony of divine Truths as they are in Themselves, and to recover its own original Dominion and Authority over the Outward Man; we give ourselves up wholly to the Conduct of the *Rational* Soul, and have no other Regard to the pure and universal Dictates and Influences of divine Light, but as they are limited, mixed with, and united to the narrow Images and Ideas of the Natural Man; which in this corrupted State being infinitely various (§. 23.), must consequently produce all that Variety of Notions and Opinions, &c. which ever have, and still do prevail among Mankind.

60. Lastly,

60. Lastly, From what has been said, we may observe how ignorantly, how unjustly, how absurdly Men treat the Objects of *Divine Faith*, when they would examine them before the inferior Tribunal of *Corrupted Reason*. No Man, surely, ever thought, that a Blind Man can discover the Nature of Colours; Or that the Deaf can have any Notion of Music; Or that the Eye can hear, or the Ear see; Or, that a finite Capacity can comprehend Infinity. And yet a Man may as fairly maintain the Affirmative of any of these Propositions, as say, That the *Rational Soul*, can or ought directly and adequately to comprehend and understand the OBJECTS of DIVINE FAITH.

And thus have I endeavour'd to give as plain and as succinct an Account of the Nature of REASON, PHILOSOPHY, MORALITY and RELIGION; and lastly, as clear a Solution, (§. 59.) to the Difficulties and Questions propos'd near the Beginning of this Discourse, as the narrow limits of
a Pre-

a Preface would permit. And as I think myself oblig'd to acknowledge, That the greatest Part of what I have advanc'd, is owing to what I have, by the blessing of GOD, learned from the following Excellent TREATISE itself; so I hope, it may be of some Service to the better Understanding the same. My Aim is chiefly to give the Reader such a Notion of Things in general, as may be of some Use to him in reading this and other Books of the same Nature and Tendency; and to let him know in particular, what he may expect from the Author's own much better Performance. And if I have but done these Things in this Place, even without giving entire Satisfaction to every Reader, as to every individual Point, I shall content myself to refer those who desire to be yet more fully satisfied, to the following Book itself for several other Arguments and Demonstrations, drawn both from the Nature of Things Themselves, and from the Holy Scriptures, which indisputably

tably prove the Fundamental Points in Debate, and upon which all the Rest are founded ; Such as the real Difference and Distinction between the *Supreme Spirit*, and the *Rational Soul*, and between *Faith* and *Reason* ; and that *Divine Faith* infinitely transcends and excells *Natural Reason* in every Respect, &c.

But besides these Two Principles in Man, our Author admits of a *Third* or *Middle Principle*, between the *Rational Soul* and *Supreme Spirit*, peculiarly made and endu'd with Senses and Faculties, suited and adapted to the World of SPIRITS.

But seeing our Advancement towards Perfection and Happiness in this Life, does not depend upon our having any Intercourse or Communication with the Spiritual World ; and seeing we find not any convincing Testimonies within ourselves, That we have such a Principle in us, it is left to every One to believe in that Matter, as he thinks fit.

I can-

I cannot however but observe, That there are some Considerations; which make it very probable, that there is such a latent Principle in us: And which, if they appear not conclusive to every One, ought nevertheless to induce them to think favourably of such as are determin'd by them.

What renders this Opinion highly probable, is, That seeing the *Supreme Spirit* is consecrated to GOD alone; and the *Rational Soul* to this Visible and Material World only; and seeing Man is said to be *like unto the Angels*, and is to be admitted into Fellowship and Society with them; he must be endu'd with another Principle different and distinct from those, and suited and adapted to the World of Spirits, in order to perceive and converse with them.

And this is what is confirm'd by the concurrent Testimonies of many truly Illuminated and Holy Persons, who, during this Life, have actually had their spiritual Senses open'd, and have seen,

seen, heard and convers'd with Spirits.

The Design then of the following TREATISE, is, To Prove, against the general Opinion of the World, and in Opposition to the *Rationalists* in particular,

That as there are THREE different and distinct ORDERS of Predicaments of BEINGS, viz. GOD the Creator of all Things, SPIRITS and BODIES;

So there are in MAN, Three different and distinct PRINCIPLES, whereof every One is endu'd with proper Senses, Powers and Faculties, to perceive, to understand, to converse with, and to enjoy their respective Objects:

And more particularly; That as the visible and material World is the Object of the *Rational* Soul, and the Light of the Sun the Medium whereby we see and perceive visible and material Objects;

So GOD Himself is the only proper and adequate Object of the *Supreme* Spirit, and His own *Divine* and *Essential* LIGHT, the alone Medium, in
and

and through which we perceive GOD as He is in Himself, and all His Infinite Attributes, Emanations and Perfections :

And consequently, That as much as the *Divine* and *Essential* LIGHT of GOD transcends and excels the visible and material Light of the *Sun*;

So far doth DIVINE FAITH, transcend and excel NATURAL REASON.

Many of these Things, I fear, will appear as *Paradoxes* to some of the *learned* Men of this Age; that is, to such as set up NATURAL, or even MORAL or HUMANE REASON as the only Guide and Standard of their FAITH. But if they really wish well to RELIGION, as I hope, many of 'em do, I shall only desire them, seriously to consider, That CHRIST, His CROSS, and His DOCTRINE, were of

Old to the JEWS a Stumbling-block, and to the GREEKS

(a People famous for their Learning) *Foolishness*. And the Reason the Apostle gives for it, is, Because the NATURAL MAN (or Ra-

tional

1 Cor. ch.
i. 23.

The PREFACE.

lxxiii

tional Soul) receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of GOD, for they are Foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned: But he that is SPIRITUAL, (that is, the Supreme Spirit or Inward Man) judgeth and discerneth all Things, yet he himself is judged of no Man.

I Cor. ch.
ii. 14, 15.

'Tis hoped, That upon a strict and impartial perusal of these Papers, it will appear, That neither the Author nor the Translator have advanc'd any Thing, (how singular and uncommon soever some Things may at first sight appear to many Readers) out of a Spirit of Novelty or Contradiction, or from any other private View or sinister Consideration whatsoever. The Interests of RELIGION and the Dignity of the HUMANE NATURE have suffer'd so much of late, not only from the Prejudices and Malice of their open Enemies, but even from the Ignorance and Temerity of those who have profess'd no small Veneration and Esteem for both; that 'twas thought

c

necessary

necessary to publish Something to the World in *English* on the other Side, in order to rectify our Notions about such noble and important Subjects, and to vindicate them from the Calumnies, the Prejudices and the Sophistry of their Adversaries; And 'tis hoped, that such an honest Design will meet with a favourable Acceptance from the better Part of Mankind.

Having thus premised what I thought necessary; I shall only advertise the Reader, That with the following ANIMADVERSIONS, our Author also publish'd in *Latin*, Three other Discourses or *Accessions*, viz. One concerning *Naked Faith*; another concerning *the Certainty and Sense* (or meaning) *of the Scriptures*; and a third about *Perfection and Happiness in this Life*. And because I take them to be Three Excellent and Useful Discourses; and that they have a near relation to the Subject Matter of the following ANIMADVERSIONS, as appears by the References, §. 191. 315. 457. They will also be shortly publish'd in *English*,

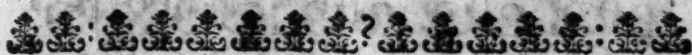
glisb, in such another small Volume as this is: And if it shall be found, that any Thing here offer'd wants to be better Explain'd, it shall be done in the Preface to those Discourses.

To conclude then, Let me desire and entreat all Honest Men, all affectionate Lovers of TRUTH, and all sincere Christians, into whose Hands these Papers shall come, diligently and impartially to search the SCRIPTURES, and to examine their own Hearts, and seriously to weigh and consider both what they read in those Divine Books, and what they observe within themselves, and to compare all together; and if after all, they find any Objections, Difficulties or Doubts arising within themselves, let them earnestly implore the Divine Goodness and Mercy to remove and disperse the Clouds of their Ignorance; and let them attentively listen to, and reflect upon the Motions and Dictates of their own Hearts and Consciences, that is, of that SPIRIT within themselves, which, by GOD's assistance, judgeth

judgeth and discerneth all Things:
Let such Persons, I say, sincerely and
faithfully follow these Directions; and
then they may be assured, that the
GOD of TRUTH, and the FATHER
of MERCIES, will in his own due
Time, lead and bring them into all
TRUTH.



THE



THESES

Laid down by way of Demonstration to shew, That

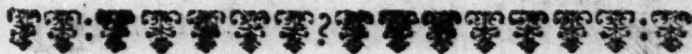
REASON

Is more Excellent than

FAITH.

Deduced from Mr. LOCK's Principles, and Published some Years since in English ;

And now
Examined and Refuted in the
following PAPERS.





THESES

Concerning

Faith and Reason.

EVery (a) Sect as far as Reason will help 'em, make use of It gladly: And where it fails 'em, they cry out, 'Tis Matter of FAITH, and above REASON. And indeed, it seems impossible to convince any Man using this Plea, without precisely fixing the Bounds between Faith and Reason.

REM-

(a) These are Mr. LOCK's Words, Hum. Understand. Lib. IV. Chap. xviii. Sect. 2.

THESES.

3

I.

REASON, as oppos'd to FAITH, is an (a) Assent to a Proposition because of its own Evidence, either Immediate, as in Principles; Or, Mediate, as in Deductions from 'em.

II.

FAITH (Divine) is an (b) Assent to a Proposition upon the Credit of (G O D) the Proposer.

III.

The Discovery of a Proposition or Truth (by G O D) in some Extraordinary Way, is call'd REVELATION (Divine), and the Proposition or Truth discover'd a (Divine) TESTIMONY.

IV.

Divine Revelation and Testimony are essential to Divine FAITH.

(a) Mr. Locke after the foregoing Words, gives a better Definition of Reason than this; but yet he defines it as an Act, viz. That 'tis the Discovery of the Certainty or Probability of a Proposition, &c. (b) This is Mr. Lock's own Definition of Faith. *Ibid.*

V.

A Truth may be discovered by GOD, either mediately, by Signs made to the Sense or Imagination; or without any, immediately to the Understanding. The first, for Distinction's sake, we shall term Sensible, and the other Intellectual Revelation.

VI.

Divine Revelation may be (c) considered with Respect either to the Person to whom it was first made; Or, to others to whom it is imparted by him. In the first Sense it may be named Original, in the latter Traditional Revelation.

VII.

Experience of all Ages Demonstrates, That Men have been mistaken in this Affair, accounting that Divine Revelation, which was not such; and judg-

(c) This Distinction is likewise taken from Mr. Lock. *Ibid.* Sect. 3, 4. as is for the most part the Substance of all these *Theses*, which may be compared with Chap. xviii, and xix. of the IVth Book: Whence it will appear wherein they agree, as also in what Particulars our Author is more mistaken than He.

THESES.

5

ing what was not, to be a Divine Testimony.

VIII.

There have not also been wanting those, who have vouched for Divine Revelation and Testimony, what they knew was not so.

IX.

It is therefore of the last Importance to distinguish aright between True and False or Pretended Divine Revelation and Testimony.

X.

The certain Knowledge that a Revelation and Testimony proceed from G O D, is of Necessity pre-supposed to a Divine Faith.

XI.

This Certain Knowledge must be attained either by REASON, or by FAITH: Not by FAITH, otherwise it must presuppose itself, (Prop. 10.) And there will be a Procession to In-

B 3

finitv :

THESES.

finity: (Prop. 4.) Therefore by REASON.

XII.

The Certainty then of REASON is presupposed of necessity to that of FAITH.

XIII.

Whosoever therefore overthrowes the Certainty of REASON, by Destroying the Foundation, ipso facto, subverts that of FAITH: And to pretend Divine REVELATION for what is Inconsistent with, or Contradictory to REASON, is but absurdly to Trifle; and unworthy a REASONABLE BEING.

But to be more Particular,

XIV.

No Man can ever have more (well grounded) Assurance of the Truth of what he receiveth by Traditional Revelation, than he hath (1) That its Author designed not to Impose upon others, pretending Revelation when he had none. (2) That its Author was not deceived himself, taking what was not,
for

THESES.

7

for Divine Revelation: (3) That he mistaketh not the true Meaning of the Signs, used by the Author to convey it to others: And all this, upon supposal he hath the Revelation at first hand: But, if from the second, third, fourth or fifth hand, those Difficulties, with some variation pro Re Nata, must be apply'd to each of the intervening Persons.

XV.

'Tis evident to the Considerer, That in this Case is pre-supposed the Certainty not only (1) of REASON in general; but also (2) of the right Use of it by the Author and intervening Persons; And (3) of their VERACITY.

XVI.

'Tis impossible One can have more Certainty of the Truth of what He supposed Communicated to him by Original sensible (Divine) Revelation, Than he has (1) That he understands aright the Meaning of the Signs: (2) That these are from GOD.

XVII.

The Certain Knowledge of these two
B 4 Particu-

THESES.

Particulars, is attainable only by Reason ; otherwise there must be Revelation upon Revelation to Infinity.

XVIII.

Original, Intellectual (Divine) Revelation, is the Perception of a Truth in the Understanding hitherto unknown, raised there Super-naturally by (G O D) without the Assistance of any such Natural Causes, as use to excite Thoughts in us.

XIX.

Before Assent be given to an Intellectual Proposition, upon Account of the Divine Veracity, 'tis necessary to know (1) All the Natural Springs and Originals, or Causes and Occasions, from whence an Intellectual Perception may proceed: (2) That the Thought in Question ariseth from none of 'em: (3) All the super-natural created Causes capable to raise an Intellectual Preception: (4) That none of those did excite this under Consideration: (5) That this Thought is not such as, being Erroneous, hath no Positive Cause at all; otherwise
we

THESES.

9

we can never be Certain that It proceeded from GOD.

XX.

'Tis Evident, we can come to the Knowledge of these Five Particulars, by no other way than by the careful Exercise of REASON; else we shall lose ourselves in an Excursion to Infinity.

XXI.

From the particular Enumeration preceding, as well as from the general Nature of REASON, FAITH, Revelation, and Testimony (Divine) it appears (1) That Divine FAITH presupposeth Divine Revelation and Testimony, Certainly known to be such; Which (2) Presupposes the right Exercise of REASON and Certainty thereof: Wherefore (3) Divine FAITH presupposeth the right Exercise of REASON, and Certainty thereof.

XXII.

Seeing it is much more Certain, that RIGHT REASON is Infallible, than That the Particular Use thereof about Re-
B 5
velation,

THESES.

velation, presupposed by Divine FAITH,
is Right; it evidently follows, That
the Certainty of RIGHT REA-
SON surpasseth that of DIVINE
FAITH.

In fine, We are either left an easy
Prey to every Seducing Spirit; Or, have
REASON assigned us, to distinguish
the TRUE from the FALSE RE-
VELATION.



ANTI-



ANIMADVERSIONS ON THE

Foregoing Pretended

Demonstration.

§. I. **I**N the first Place, I sincerely
 Declare, That if it should
 be thought, that I have
 used any sharp Expressions any where
 hereafter against REASON, that I
 mean not thereby in any wise to Re-
 flect on the Author of the foregoing
Theses. For I know by sad Experience,
 That even a Man of good Inclina-
 tions (as I hope the Author is) may
 be long detained in such Errors,
 which are so finely gilded over with
 the specious Appearance of Truth.
 And I am the more willing to par-
 don

1.
 We must not
 take what's
 said hereaf-
 ter against
 REASON,
 as meant a-
 gainst the
 Author of
 the *Theses*.

don such Mistakes, because I must acknowledge, even against my Will, that the Principles and Notions hitherto commonly received, are so far from being able to give a satisfactory Solution to such Doubts as are usually started, that they seem rather to lead Naturally into them.

X 2.

In general,
Reason tends
to destroy
the Authority
of the Holy
Scriptures

§. 2. These Things Premised; my Opinion in general is, That Crafty Reason, the most Pestilential Offspring of the Serpent, has strongly imposed on this Author: Which, at this one compendious Birth, has brought forth whatever can, with any Colour, be alledged to undermine and destroy the Authority of the Holy Scriptures; and of all other Divine Revelations, if any such there be; which yet, I hope, none but Ignorant and Irreligious Men will presume to deny.

For, Who is so Stupid, as not easily to perceive, If the Divine Oracles are to be Examined by the Rules which this Author lays down, *Thes.* 14, 15, 19. that all Faith in them will be entirely destroyed and taken away: And, that he that goes about to Judge of Revelation by his Method, will be involved in such inextricable

tricable Doubts, that finding Things desperate on all Sides, he will be inclined to bid adieu to all Religion, and to all the Extraordinary Divine Warnings, whereby GOD in his Infinite Goodness has reclaimed, or at least, has sometimes shewn himself willing (as ought at least to appear probable even to Reason) to recall Miserable Creatures from Destruction? Is it not evident, that such a Method as that proposed by this Author, would effectually and wholly preclude all Hopes and Means of Supernal Help, whereby Mankind fallen and degenerated even almost into the Nature of Beasts (as too plainly appears from the Universal Corruption and Degeneracy, not only of the Heathen World, but even of the Christian Church) can only be made sensible of the Dangerous State they are sunk into; Instructed in the Knowledge of Things Eternal; and finally excited to a due Care of their own Salvation? And yet is it not manifest, that we stand in need of such Extraordinary Help, seeing neither the Wisest of the Ancient Sages, nor the most Celebrated among the Moderns, could ever by the sole Help
of

of Reason, how much soever improved, arrive at such Knowledge, nor find out the Means of obtaining such Noble and Necessary Ends? Nor does such a Method only exclude all Supernal Help, but likewise opens a large Field to all manner of Audaciousness, by Reason of the immoderate Desire we have of giving ourselves, under some Pretence of Right, the Preference to all others; and of indulging the violent Tendency and Bent of our own Inclinations, eternally to Differ and Dispute about, and finally to Neglect, Confound, and Invert the Order of all Things.

Nor can it be fairly Objected, That, even the Persuasion of the Divine Original of the Holy Scriptures, and Faith founded thereupon, has not been able to put a stop to those Evils: For that a stop has not been put to 'em, is not occasion'd thro' any default of Revelation, or of Faith, but is wholly to be imputed to Reason, which in a most Sacrilegious Manner has presumed to intermeddle in Divine Matters. And the Mischief will still grow upon our Hands, so long as the uncertain and ever changeable Dictates of that Unconstant and Wavering

Wavering Idol, shall most erroneously be taken for the Oracles of Truth itself. I say the Mischief lies in this, that Men resign themselves blindly to the Conduct of their own corrupted Reason; which yet None could ever reduce to any Certainty; nay, which very often Contradicts and is a Scandal to itself; as sufficiently appears from the many sharp Disputes among the Learned, and the different Reception that the same Opinions have met with in the several Ages of the World; but above all, from the many abominable, absurd and contradictory Notions and Opinions which have been maintained by many great and Learned Men, and are still kept up in the World, concerning GOD, Religion, the Soul, Life Eternal, &c.

So that there cannot be a more effectual and pernicious Method invented to Destroy and Root out all Christian Piety, than that proposed by this Author.

Which alone, in the Account of all sincere Lovers of true Holiness, ought to be looked upon as the strongest of Demonstrations *ab absurdo*.

See the Pre-
amble to the
Theses.

I might add, That this Author's Opinion is diametrically opposite to the Divine Oracles, if I were not apprehensive that what he says of Reason, is truly verified in himself, with Relation to those Sacred Testimonies, which so far as they favour him, he may willingly admit; but when they oppose his Notions, he may then apply himself to Reason for Help, and refuse to submit his own to the Divine Judgment, until, in the Court of Reason, where he himself shall sit as Judge, all his *Postulata* (*Thes.* 14, 15, and 19.) be fully made good, which surely can never happen. For upon occasion, he may call in CRITICISM (a near Relation to Reason, shall I say, or her Eldest Daughter) to his Aid, which will still more confound the Matter, and continually furnish him with infinite Varieties of Doubts.

3.
A Prayer.

§. 3. But before I descend to Particulars; “Thou, O Father of
“Lights, and Thou, O Light Eter-
“nally Begotten, and Thou, O Ho-
“ly Spirit of Truth, O Most Holy
“Individual Trinity, in whose Light
“we see Light, illuminate Thou my
“Mind, and so present Things to
“the

“ the Eye thereof, that I may see
“ them clearly, and bear such Testi-
“ mony to them, as shall carry its
“ own Evidence, and be always a-
“ greeable with itself : Add likewise
“ Strength and Force to my Words,
“ that such who are well Inclined,
“ to whom onely these Things are
“ written, may be either brought
“ back into the Paths of Truth : Or,
“ if they yet continue therein, that
“ they may be strengthened and for-
“ tified against all the Crafty Temp-
“ tations of the Serpent. From Thee,
“ O most Merciful Father, I hope
“ for, and most earnestly desire this
“ only Favour ”.

Now to the Business.



THE SIS

In particular
Thesis I.

4.
The Definition
of REASON.

THEESIS I.
REASON, as opposed to **FAITH**, is
an Assent to a Proposition because of its
own Evidence; either Immediate, as in
Principles; or Mediate, as in Deductions
from 'em.

Animadversions.

§. 4. This is a very false Definition
of **REASON**.

(1.) It is not
an Act.

For (1) How can a Thing itself
be defined, or its Nature explained
by any one mere Act? And what is
Assent, but an Act, and that (even in
the Opinion of most of the Rational-
lists themselves) not so much of *Reason*,
as of the *Will*, and very often
procured through the Illusion and De-
ception of Reason?

5.
(2.) The Au-
thor himself
takes it af-
terwards for
a Faculty.

§. 5. Nor (2) Does this Author
use the Word *Reason* in the same sense
afterwards, as its here described,

And yet it is an undeniable Max-
im of Reason itself, That a Definition,
and the Thing Defined, ought always to
be convertible, so that one may Indif-
ferently be put for the other.

But

But if in the Case in Hand; we should every where substitute this Definition of Reason, in the Place of the Word Reason, the Sense would often become Ridiculous.

For Instance; The Twenty-second Thesis runs thus: *Seeing it is much more certain that RIGHT REASON is Infallible, than that the particular Use THEREOF (i. e. of REASON) about Revelation, which (Use) Divine Faith presupposes, is right, &c.* Now instead of the Word or Thing defined, viz. REASON, which is twice used here, substitute the Author's foregoing Definition, and then the Thesis will run in these Terms; *Seeing it is much more certain, that A RIGHT ASSENT TO A PROPOSITION BECAUSE OF ITS OWN EVIDENCE, is Infallible, than That the Particular Use OF THAT RIGHT ASSENT TO A PROPOSITION BECAUSE OF ITS OWN EVIDENCE, about Revelation, which Divine Faith (i. e. An Assent to a Proposition upon the Credit of (GOD) the Proposer,) presupposes, is right, &c.* Which is such a Jargon, as no Man alive can understand, nor make any Thing of.

'Tis

Animadversions on Thesis I.

'Tis plain then, that in this Place the Author has forgot himself; and that in obedience to the Dictates of Common Sense, he has taken *Reason*, not for an *Assent*, but for the *Power* or *Faculty* of *Assenting*; unless he would rather be thought to talk absurdly, and to fight even against the Inventions of his own Brain.

For none of those that maintain a real Distinction between Faith and Reason, and with whom this Author enters the Lists, did ever take Reason in any other Sense, than as a certain *Faculty* of the Rational Soul.

6.
(3) But then
he begs the
Question.

§. 6. But then (3) This Author begs the Question; For, as I have already observed, Many of the greatest Sticklers for Reason, ascribe the Faculty of Assenting, not to *Reason*, nor to the *Understanding*, but to the *Will*.

But supposing the Power of Assenting could be attributed to the *Understanding*, 'tis still begging the Question, while the Author supposes, That there is but *one Understanding*, and only one Way of Understanding, which he is pleased to call by the Name of Reason. But this I Deny, and shall afterwards Demonstrate the Contrary.

§. 7.

§. 7. But (4) If we Consider the Rest of the Definition, we shall find that the Author speaks obscurely, and that he begs the Question again.

7.
(4) And speaks obscurely.

§. 8. That he speaks obscurely is manifest, in that he does not tell us, what a *Proposition's own Evidence* is, nor whence he has it.

8.
Why?

§. 9. For, What is an evident Proposition? Perhaps he will say, a Proposition is evident, when we clearly and distinctly Perceive both the Terms, and the Agreement or Disagreement between 'em.

9.
The Evidence of a Proposition what?

§. 10. But that Expression, *To Perceive clearly and distinctly*, admits of great Variety, and therefore wants to be clearly and distinctly explained.

10.
It wants an Explication.

And this we ought the rather to insist upon, because we plainly see every Day, that many grossly err in this Point, and think they clearly and distinctly Perceive such Things, which yet they do not at all perceive.

§. 11. But to be more particular: We know that sometimes we perceive the Things Themselves; and sometimes the Ideas and Images of Things absent.

11.
Perception distinguish'd.

§. 12. We perceive Things themselves when they are present, and by

12.
How Things themselves are perceived.

a real Influx act and strike upon the corresponding Faculties, and truly imprint their Properties or Qualities upon them.

13.
Sensation.
Senses.

§. 13. And this real Perception, is what is called SENSATION: And the Faculties that are adapted to receive such Perceptions, are commonly called the SENSES.

14.
Are divers;
whence our
Sensations
are also di-
vers.

§. 14. Now, that we are endued with divers Senses, is beyond all Controversy: Therefore we must by Consequence be capable of various Kinds of real Perceptions or Sensations.

15.
Even with
regard to
Spirituals.
* Sect. 37--
41.

§. 15. Nor are our Senses and Sensations thus diversified with regard to Corporeal Things only; there are also those that are * peculiarly fitted for Spiritual Objects, and others that are solely adapted for Things Divine.

The Distin-
ction of Sen-
ses,

Thus for Instance, The *Outward* Senses are given us for the Things of this Visible World; the *Inward* for the Things of the Invisible World; and finally, the *Innermost* for Things merely Divine.

16.
The Under-
standing
What?

§. 16. These Three several Sorts of Senses, have each a peculiar Kind of Understanding or Knowledge be-
longing to it; whereby a Man is not only

only conscious to himself of his own Sensations, but is also able to Consider, Weigh, and Compare (&c.) them one with another.

§. 17. So that consequently, there is in Man an *Outward* Understanding dedicated to this World; an *Inward* one accommodated to the Invisible World; and an *Innermost* or Divine Understanding consecrated to GOD alone.

17. Understanding distinguished.

§. 18. By these several Ways, Things themselves, when they are present, and affect and strike the Senses, are really, clearly, and infallibly perceived and understood; because as they are, so they act; nor can they emit and imprint upon the Senses other Emanations than what themselves actually have and possess.

18. Real Perception is Infallible.

§. 19. As to what relates to the *Ideas* or *Images* of Things *Absent*; every Body knows, That after the Things themselves have actually left off to strike our Senses, and to raise Sensations in us, that they leave behind them certain Footsteps or Impressions in the Mind, whereby we are enabled to distinguish them from one another; to understand what we

19. The Images of Things absent remain with us.

only

a real Influx act and strike upon the corresponding Faculties, and truly imprint their Properties or Qualities upon them.

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* Self. 37--
41.

§. 15. Nor are our Senses and Sensations thus diversified with regard to Corporeal Things only; there are also those that are * peculiarly fitted for Spiritual Objects, and others that are solely adapted for Things Divine.

The Distin-
ction of Sen-
ses,

Thus for Instance, The *Outward* Senses are given us for the Things of this Visible World; the *Inward* for the Things of the Invisible World; and finally, the *Innermost* for Things merely Divine.

16.
The Under-
standing
What?

§. 16. These Three several Sorts of Senses, have each a peculiar Kind of Understanding or Knowledge belonging to it; whereby a Man is not only

only conscious to himself of his own Sensations, but is also able to Consider, Weigh, and Compare (&c.) them one with another.

§. 17. So that consequently, there is in Man an *Outward Understanding* dedicated to this World; an *Inward* one accommodated to the Invisible World; and an *Innermost* or Divine Understanding consecrated to GOD alone.

17. Understanding distinguished.

§. 18. By these several Ways, Things themselves, when they are present, and affect and strike the Senses, are really, clearly, and infallibly perceived and understood; because as they are, so they act; nor can they emit and imprint upon the Senses other Emanations than what themselves actually have and possess.

18. Real Perception is Infallible.

§. 19. As to what relates to the *Ideas* or *Images* of Things *Absent*; every Body knows, That after the Things themselves have actually left off to strike our Senses, and to raise Sensations in us, that they leave behind them certain Footsteps or Impressions in the Mind, whereby we are enabled to distinguish them from one another; to understand what we

19. The Images of Things absent remain with us.

I. on the truly qualities ion, is : And to re- nmon- ndued nd all must of va- ons or d Sen- regard ere are y fitted rs that ivine. utward ings of rd for World; Things orts of ind of ge be- is not only

we say or think of every One, and to call to Mind all their several Qualities: As when in the Night-time I think of the *Sun*.

And these Footsteps or Impressions, is what we call the *Ideas* or *Images* of Things.

20.
Even of
things Spi-
ritual.

§. 20. And as we are thus Conscious to Our selves, That *Corporeal* Things imprint their *Ideas* on the Mind; so must we in like manner allow the same Power to *Spiritual* and *Divine* Objects with regard to their respective Faculties; This, I say, we must grant, or we must suppose (what is highly improbable, if not absurd) that the Devils do not remember any thing that befell them in Heaven.

21.
The Ima-
gination
what?

§. 21. That Faculty therefore of the Soul, which is the Seat and Repository of all those Images, whether of Things Spiritual or Corporeal, I shall call the *Imagination*; which is consequently Threefold, according to the Threefold Distinction of the Senses.

22.
Ideas either
passive.

§. 22. All these *Ideas*, in as much as they are produced, and imprinted on the Imagination by the Objects them-

themselves, are called * *Passive*.

§. 23. But there are other *Ideas*,
which we our selves make, either in
whole, or in part, by the Addition
of something to those that are Pas-
sive. Or, ^{23.} Active;

As for Instance: Suppose, I never In whole;
saw the Sun, but only the Moon and
Stars; and that I have only felt the
Heat of the Fire; I hear many won-
derful Things of the Sun, as that its
Light diffuseth itself over all the
World, and that its Heat maketh all
Things fruitful, &c. Doubtless I im-
mediately form in my Mind some
Idea of such a strange Thing; and
by much Meditation, I paint and
adorn it as well as I am able. The
Moon and Stars afford the Colours
of Light, and the Fire, which I have
hitherto been only used to, supplies
me with Notions of Heat. Now its
evident, that I have form'd this *Intire*
Image wholly out of my own Head;
being yet supposed neither to have

* They are Passive as to their original and first Admis-
sion into the Understanding; but when afterwards they
are made use of upon any other Occasion by the Un-
derstanding, this is done by, and owing to the Activity
thereof; so that they are not then merely *passive*, but
have that in common with Active Ideas.

seen nor perceived any Thing of the Sun.

Other Images we form only in Part: For Instance; suppose, upon seeing the Sun, I conclude from what he at first appears to my Senses, that he is not above a Foot and an half in Diameter; but that upon Consulting the *Mathematicks*, and making the proper Calculations, I conclude, that he is a hundred thousand times bigger than the Earth.

Now these *Ideas*, in as much as they are produced and formed by ourselves, may for Distinction's sake be called *active*.

24.
The Active
Understand-
ing what?

§. 24. The Soul of Man therefore is endued with a certain *Faculty* of *painting* or *forming* in the Imagination divers *Images* of Things *absent*, and even of such Things as she never saw before: All which she may Contemplate, Examine, and Compare one with another, and make Deductions from them; and from thence she may, if she pleases, proceed to form new Images *ad infinitum*. And from hence arises another peculiar Sort of *Understanding*, which being wholly imployed about *Active Ideas*, we shall therefore call *Active*.

§. 25. Hence it appears, that there are Four Sorts of *Understanding*, viz. *Outward, Inward, Innermost, and Active.*

25.
How many
Sorts of Un-
derstanding
there are.

§. 26. Again, Its evident, that the Three first are merely *Passive*, with regard to their respective Objects; for they only receive the Impressions as they are made by them. In like manner as the Eye, that runs over several Objects before it, and Considers and Compares them together several ways, is yet nevertheless merely *Passive* with respect of the Impressions which flow from the Objects, and are imprinted therein, and to which, the Eye itself can neither add nor diminish.

26.
And how
many are
Passive.

§. 27. Moreover, The *Understanding* may be distinguished as to its Effects, and may be called either an *Understanding of the Heart*, which affects, moves and efficaciously persuades the Heart, according as the Object is Good or Evil; and consequently induces it truly to Love or Hate the same: When we understand a Thing in this manner GOD himself is the Vital Principle that Acts and Illuminates.

27.
The Under-
standing of
the Heart
what?

28.
And of the
Brain?

§. 28. Or, it may be called, an Understanding of the *Brain* only, which consists in mere Speculation; and neither inclines, nor determines the Will to Act suitable to the Persuasions thereof; so that here we are only guided by the barren, uncertain, and mimical Faculty of Reason.

29.
There are
many De-
grees, and
several Sorts
of Evidence.

§. 29. And thus, 'tis evident, That there are many Faculties, and many Ways of Perception; and that every One has its own peculiar Kind and Degree of Clearness or Obscurity, of Plainness or Confusion.

30.
Obj. That
we multiply
Understand-
ings.

§. 30. Nor ought it to be wondered at, That we make so many several Species of Understanding. But if any One make a Difficulty of it, it will sufficiently Answer our Purpose to observe; That there are so many distinct Sorts of Intellectual Operations, whereof every One has its own peculiar Properties. All which ought not by any means to be confounded one with another.

31.
What is re-
quired to E-
vidence?

§. 31. Now these Things being thus distinguished; let us resume the Question (§. 9, 10.) and enquire, What is required to *Evidence*, so that we may be said to perceive a Thing Clearly

Clearly and Distinctly ? Surely it must vary according to the Variety above-mention'd.

§. 32. Thus as to *Outward, Inward,* ^{32. Five Things} and *Innermost* Vision (which seems to ^{requisite to} fit our Purpose best) It may be said, ^{clear and distinct Vision.} there is required (1) That the Object be placed at a due Distance. (2) That it make an Impression on the corresponding Visive Faculty, which we call the Eye. (3) That the Impression be lively and strong. (4) That the Eye be well disposed ; And (5) That the Impressions of the Object be transmitted to the Eye, by, and through a fit and convenient Medium. If any One of these Requisites be wanting, it's manifest, That either the Eye cannot see at all, or but very Obscurely and Confusedly.

§. 33. Now the Medium which ^{33. Light is the Medium.} conveys the *Lively* and *Distinct* (for the Devils also see and are seen in Darkness, but obscurely) Impressions of the Objects to the Eye, is, as every Body must allow, the LIGHT.

§. 34. This then ought to be due- ^{34. Which} ly proportioned to the Object, and ^{ought to be} to the Eye, in order to produce Clear ^{duely pro-} and Distinct Vision ; otherwise the ^{portioned to} the Object & ^{to the Eye.} Eye

Eye will either not see at all, or but very obscurely and confusedly.

35.
As is evident from Experience.

§. 35. And thus Experience shews us, That we see many Things by Moon-Light, but very obscurely; That many Things cannot be seen at all by that Light, which yet in the Day-time are very Conspicuous; and That even in a Cloudy Day many minute Things escape our Sight, That, upon the breaking out of the Sun, we see plainly enough.

36.
The several Sorts of Light.

§. 36. The *Outward* Light of the Sun is therefore required to the Things of this World; The *Inward* to the Things of the Invisible World; And the *Innermost* and *Divine* Light to Things Divine, in order to perceive them Clearly and Distinctly.

37.
Spiritual Things are also really perceived by SENSE.

§. 37. If it be urged, That some of these Things are not fully and clearly enough Deduced: I Answer, That I know not why any One should Demand to have those Things demonstrated to him, which his own Sense and Experience informs him of; and such is every Thing that I have alledged, or at least, manifest Corrollaries from 'em; except it be this one Position, which some Men may at first sight be inclined to De-

ny

ny or Cavil at, viz. That Spiritual and Divine Things are, or can be, also really perceived by Sense.

§. 38. But surely, That Man must be destitute of Reason, or notoriously Wicked, that will not be Determined as to this Matter, by the concurrent Testimonies of many Great and Good Men of all Ages, and even of CHRIST himself (*John* ch. iii. 32, 33. ch. v. 19, 20, 30, ch. viii. 26.) in such Things as they learned by Experience, and felt in themselves, when at the same time, he does not scruple to believe innumerable other Things barely upon the Credit of others, tho' he never saw, nor perceived them himself, nor had them proved to him by any Argument. Nay, when he judges and determines without any Hesitation concerning Things of very great Moment, and such as regard the Goods, the Reputation, and even the Life of Man itself, and that barely upon the Credit of what others affirm.

§. 39. But farther; If Spiritual and Divine Things are not, nor can not be really and *sensibly* perceived, as they are in themselves, then all Religion is Vain; the Holy Scriptures

38. Which is proved by the Testimony of such as have Experienced the same.

39. And by several Proofs as *surdo*.

are false, and contain Nothing but idle Stories; and Happiness is only imaginary, and a meer Dream. For, if Things be not really perceived as they are in themselves, then their *Images* only are perceived: Then that Eternal Felicity, which is so highly magnified, and so universally desired, is yet notwithstanding, wholly imaginary.

§. 40. This therefore, is such a wicked Suggestion, that I want Words to express the Horror it raises in my Breast, or to represent it in its proper Colours to others!

41.
And referred
to other
Places here-
after for o-
ther Argu-
ments.

* Sect. 59--
61, 62, 197,
198, 199,
200, 260---
263.

§. 41. But least shallow Reason should secretly rejoyce, as if we could produce no Arguments drawn from the Nature of the Thing itself, I must refer the Reader to a more proper * Place, where he will find the same Thing proved by unanswerable Arguments. What we have already observed, is sufficient to shew how egregiously she is mistaken, when, passing over all the abovementioned Considerations, she boldly offers this false, obscure, and confused Definition of herself, which in effect, is nothing to the Purpose; and then, to mend the Matter, lays the

the same down as the first Principle of what she has further to offer.

§. 42. But (which was the other Part of our Assertion §. 7.) He begs the Question again, and takes for granted, what he ought to have proved. For the Question in short, is this; Whether *Reason* does Clearly and Distinctly Perceive Things as they are in *Themselves*, and more especially, Things *Divine*? Which, if taken in the Affirmative, as this Author does, is what I positively and flatly Deny.

⁴² He begs the Question again.

§. 43. Thus then Reason forgetful of its own Precepts, has most grossly Erred in the very Entrance; which I believe, happens by a Special Providence: Seeing it might be of great Use to all Sincere Lovers of Solid and Living Truth, That subtle Reason itself should in the very Beginning give such a flagrant Instance of its own Blindness, and thereby shew what they have to expect from such a Guide, which neither knows how to begin, nor where to end.

⁴³ Reason Errs in the very Entrance.

§. 44. But then, it may be asked, What I mean by *Reason*? I'll tell you here in short, What I understand

⁴⁴ Reason what?

by the Word in the common Way of Speech; and shall afterwards give you a more accurate Account of the true Nature thereof.

^{45.}
Is Describ'd. §. 45. REASON then, is, that *Faculty*, whereby a Man, by Means of the Real Perceptions and Images of Things formerly imprinted in his Mind, is enabled to form various Ideas of absent Objects, and to compare them one with another; to Compound, Divide, and Consider them sundry Ways; and by variously Considering them, to advance new Notions, form Arguments, and draw Conclusions from them, &c. In doing whereof, He is apt to commit many Errors.

^{46.}
And is commonly taken in such a Sense. §. 46. That there is such a Faculty in Man, no Body in his Wits will go about to Deny. And it is equally Evident, that all these Things are commonly comprehended under the Name of Reason; and that they are all, with one Consent, ascribed to it as its proper Operations.

^{47.}
The State of the Controversy. §. 47. But that this is also the self-same *Faculty*, whereby Things *Eternal*, Things *Divine*, and Things merely *Spiritual*, are (or must be) Really and *Sensibly* Perceived by us, is, what the

the Rationalists have yet to Prove; and they are obliged to Demonstrate it as clear as Noon-day. And I have the more Reason to require this at their Hands, because they are so bold and perverse as to presume to draw Things of so high and exalted a Nature before an Inferior Tribunal. But if I am not wholly mistaken in every Thing, He that attempts such a Demonstration, will find himself greatly Deceived, and in the End fall infinitely short thereof. However, That our Adversaries may have no Evasion, I desire it may be observed, That the Dispute between Us, is not about the Name, but about the Thing itself.

THESIS II.

Thesis II.

FAITH (Divine) is an Assent to a Proposition upon the Credit of (GOD) the Proposer.

The Definition of FAITH.

Animadversions.

§. 48. This Definition of FAITH is as false as that of Reason. For how can it be, That any One single Act of Assenting can constitute the Essence

48. Is likewise false.

sence of *Faith*? And, That not a Primary, nor a Principal Act; but a Secondary and less Principal One, and which exerts itself by way of Consequence only? This, to be sure, must be one of the great Discoveries of this Polite (as they call it) and Refined Age!

49.
We must
look for an-
ther Account
of Faith.

§. 49. I will now Explain my Notion of FAITH; and that I may be the better understood, I shall deduce the whole Matter from the Beginning.

50.
GOD made
Man.

§. 50. That GOD made Man, is, I hope, Agreed on all Sides.

51.
For some
Good End,

§. 51. And as the *Most Wise* GOD did not make Man, but for some certain Wise and Noble End:

And with
suitable Fa-
culties.

So without all Peradventure, He also sufficiently endued him with Faculties, or Capacities to seek and obtain that End.

52.
Which were
to be made
Happy in
their proper
Objects.

§. 52. And as the same GOD is Infinitely Good, and Infinitely Just, whatever Faculties He has endued Man with, He has likewise provided proper Objects for them, whereby to enable him to make them compleatly Happy in their utmost Extent and Capacity.

§ 53.

§. 53. For Man could not but be most miserable, had GOD endued him with any Faculties, and not at the same time provided adequate Objects to fill and satisfy them.

53.
Otherwise
Man had
been made
a miserable
Creature.

§. 54. But to think, That a GOD Infinitely Good; all whose Acts both of Counsel and Will, are universally, every Way, in every Sense, and in every Respect, as well in Himself, and in regard of Himself, as in regard of all other Things, and especially of his own Specific Object, are, and in their own Nature cannot but be absolutely, simply, and universally Good; so that, If any Thing in the least Degree, in any Sense, or in any Manner of Way be affected with the least Thing that's Evil, or not Good, we are thereby assuredly Taught, That it is not of GOD; I say, To think or surmise of such a GOD, that He made Man to be perpetually tormented with Faculties ever craving, but never to be filled nor satisfied, would be the greatest Blasphemy.

54.
Which is in-
consistent
with the
Goodness of
GOD.

Who can be
the Author
of nothing
but what is
Good.

§. 55. And hence we are furnished with an unanswerable Argument, to Prove, That if there be found in Man a Perpetual, Constant and Radical

55
Man is capa-
ble of that
Good to
which he
finds a Radi-
cal Tendency
in himself.

dical Tendency, Effort or Desire to any Good, that, as to the Appointment of GOD, he ought to enjoy the same: And consequently, that he is endued with a Constitution and all Faculties necessary for the Obtaining thereof.

56. Thus he finds in himself a Desire of the Supreme Good. §. 56. But if a Man will attentively consider Himself, and a little more narrowly observe his own Motions, he cannot but find in his most Inward Parts, a certain Central, as I may say, and most Passionate *Desire* of the *Chiefest Good*; such a *Desire*, as cannot at any time, nor in any wise be extinguished.

57. Which is Illustrated: §. 57. For whatever a Man desires or does, it is all done under the Appearance and Notion of Good, and whatever he obtains of any sort of Good (or which he takes for Good at least, tho' very often it be not really so) he finds notwithstanding, that he still desires more and greater Things; and finally, That there is nothing in the whole Circle of the Creation, that can fully satisfy him.

58. And is the Root of Hell in us. §. 58. And (if Reason can bear with such Things as are only hinted at here, but not Proved) this Indelible and most Fervent Desire of the Sovereign Good, does indeed make up the

the Chiefest Part of that Everlasting and Unquenchable Infernal Fire, wherewith a Poor Soul, deceived by its own shallow Reason, and seeing itself Deprived and Cut off from all its Hopes through its own Fault, shall be Eternally Tormented.

§. 59. As therefore this Desire of the Sovereign Good, is the most essential and Innermost Center of the Soul; so is it most certainly * furnish'd with all such Faculties as are necessarily required, to enable it truly and really (and not Ideally and in Imagination only) to Enjoy and Possess that Good; which Faculties therefore we shall call *Divine*, in as much as GOD alone, who is the Only Sovereign Good, is their proper Object.

59. This Radical Desire is furnished with Faculties capable of Enjoying GOD Really. * Sect. 55.

§. 60. But, That that Central Desire, or Power of Willing, may truly and really Enjoy the Sovereign Good, i. e. GOD Himself; its absolutely Necessary, that it be endued with Power to *Perceive*, to *Love* freely, and to *Rejoyce* in Him.

60. What those Faculties are? Perceiving and Rejoycing.

And thus from the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness and Justice of GOD, and from a strict Survey of our own Hearts, its evident beyond
Contra-

SPIRITUAL THINGS themselves are really Perceived by SENSE.

Contradiction, that GOD *Himself* (and consequently Things Spiritual as well as Corporeal) is *really* Perceived, as He is in Himself, without any Intermediate Image. And thus have I acquitted myself of the Promise that I made, §. 41.

61.
Two Things
to be con-
sidered in Per-
ception.

§. 61. Now in this lively Perception of GOD *Himself*, there are two Things to be Consider'd; (1) The *Sensation* of GOD insinuating and giving Himself to be Enjoyed; (2) The being *Conscious* to ourselves of that Sensation; in Consequence whereof, we Consider, Examine and Compare it with others, and view and distinguish their several Relations; and finally solicit the Will to act suitably thereunto.

62.
That we
have in us a
Divine Sense
and Under-
standing.

§. 62. The Central Fund is therefore endued with Two Faculties, wherein these Two Operations are Performed.

The first we shall call *Divine Sense*; which is the Immediate and Passive Subject (or rather Organ) that Receives the Divine Influx.

The other is called, *Understanding* or *Wisdom*.

63.
This Fund,
and these Di-
vine Facul-
ties of the
Soul joynly:

§. 63. And thus you see, That that Central and Infinite DESIRE of the

the SOVERAIGN GOOD, is the Innermost Fund of the Soul; and that it is endued with Three Divine Faculties, *viz.* Sense, Understanding, and Divine Love and Joy; all which we shall henceforward call by the Name of the *Supreme* or *Pure Spirit*.

Are call'd
the *Spirit*.

§. 64. But seeing there are in GOD an Infinite Number of Realities, which he presents by turns and successively, and according to his own free Good Pleasure, as the adequate and proper Objects of our Joy and Happiness: We cannot doubt, but that the Footsteps and Images of those that went before, Remain with us; and consequently, that we preserve the Memory of past Benefits, and either Reflect on them within ourselves, or Discourse of 'em with others.

64.
The Fruition
of the Rea-
lities in GOD
leaves and
imprints
their Ideas
in us.

§. 65. And hence it appears, That the *Supreme* Spirit of Man, is endued with a fourth Faculty, *viz.* Divine Imagination; but much inferior to the other Three: Because that in *them*, the Enjoyment of the Beatific Union is actually Completed; that is, in them we really enjoy GOD Himself, and all his Infinite Perfections and Realities; but in this we meet with nothing but the Remembrance

65.
The Su-
preme Spi-
rit is endued
with a Di-
vine Imagi-
nation.

brance of past Delights, and a certain Accessory Recreation with the Images of Things absent.

66. This Supreme Spirit is the Breath of Life, and the Basis of the Divine Image in us.

§. 66. And this *Supreme Spirit* of Man, which others call the *Apex* of the Mind, is, as I conceive, that *Divine Breath* of Life, mention'd in *Holy Writ*, which *GOD* Himself did immediately breath out of his own Substance into the Face of Man; and wherein the Image of *GOD* does chiefly consist.

67. To shew wherein this Similitude or Image does consist, *GOD* is considered. (1) As a *Willing Power*, er, having a Faculty of Perception.

§. 67. For, If we consider the *FIRST* and infinitely perfect *BEING*, the first Thing that we can conceive in Him, is a most lively *POWER* of *WILLING*, Infinitely Capable, and Infinitely Desirous of Infinite Perception.

68. The Sense and Wisdom of *GOD*.

§. 68. But this Faculty of Perception includes two Things, as we have already observ'd, (§. 61, 62.) viz. *Sense*, and *Understanding* or *Wisdom*.

The first Notion of the Divine Wisdom.

And this is the first and most Rational Notion of the Divine Wisdom, which for Distinction's sake, we shall call, the *Subjective* Wisdom of *GOD*.

69. The Eye of Eternity.

§. 69. This Eternal Power of Willing, together with Sense and Understanding essentially inherent therein, may not improperly be call'd the Magic

Magic Eye, the Eternal Eye, the Eye of Eternity, and perhaps in Scripture Phrase the FATHER. The FATHER.

§. 70. In this abstracted Notion of the Deity, we find nothing but *Darkness* and great *Anguish*. Not that such Things are or can be really in GOD; but if it were possible (as it is not) that this most ardent Desire of Infinite Perception, could be deprived of, or without a Proper and Adequate Object, in which Case it would be ever desiring, but never satisfy'd; then would it be unavoidably involv'd in the thickest *Darkness*, and tormented with unconceiveable *Anxiety*. 70. Darknes and Anxiety.

§. 71. But such is the indissoluble *Unity* of the First and Infinitely Perfect Being, that such a Separation can never be made. Which by reason of the Unity of the Deity, cannot be.

For as that Eternal Power of Willing Infinitely hungers and thirsts, and nothing else that's Infinite can be assigned to fill and satisfy it, but that very Power of Willing itself, which can never be absent from, nor wanting to itself; 'tis evident, That the said Infinite and Eternal Power of Willing always finds what it seeks, and that in finding what it seeks (that

is, itself) it is consequently Eternally and Compleatly Happy therein.

72.
(2) In what
manner
there is Ge-
nerated in
GOD,

§. 72. That is to say, (which is the second Thing that offers itself to One that maturely Considers the Supreme and Infinitely Perfect BEING) It turns and Reflects all its own Essence in and upon It self, its own Center or Central Sense; which, together with all the Vibrations of its own Infinite Vertues, tend to, and become the proper and adequate Objects thereof.

73.
The Real
Perception of
Himself as a
Divine Off-
spring;

§. 73. And from this Harmonious Influx of the Divine Essence into its own Fund or Center, a Divine OFF-SPRING, as I may say, is from Eternity, and to Eternity, formed in the most Inward Parts of the Divinity, viz. An Actual, Perfect, Plenary, Experimental and REALL PERCEPTION of ITSELF, with which alone GOD is pleased, and in which alone He fully and most happily Acquiesces.

74.
Which is the
Only Be-
gotten SON
of GOD.

§. 74. Thus GOD being REALLY PERCEIVED BY HIMSELF and IN HIMSELF, is that ONLY BEGOTTEN SON of GOD, the whole Desire, Delight, Affection, and Heart; namely, the ARCHE-

TYPAL

TYPAL OBJECTIVE WISDOM The Arche-
typal Objec-
tive Wif-
dom of the
FATHER.
(which is the other Notion of this Word) of the Father, which He Perceives, Knows, and Understands.

Essentially ; finally, This is the Eternal WORD, whereby the Father eternally Declares Himself ; for what is a Word, but the Manifestation and Expression of a Thing that was before hidden and concealed within us ? Thus then, Light arises out of Darkness, and *the Brightness of his Glory, and the Express Image of his Substance* (Heb. i. 3.) Illuminates the whole Abyss of the Divinity with Light risen
out of Dark-
ness,
And the
Brightness of
his Glory. marvellous and most Glorious Light.

§. 75. And thus GOD Tastes, Sees, Feels, Understands, Perceives, and Hears Himself *beatifically*. 75.
And the
Happiness of
GOD.

§. 76. For from these Two, *viz.* An Infinite POWER or most Ardent DESIRE of Infinite Perception, and a Real and Lively PERCEPTION of its own Infinite Self ; there cannot but proceed some Third Thing, *viz.* A most Hearty and most Pleasant HOLY LOVE, pervading, as I may say, the whole Substance of the Deity, and breathed by the FATHER through the SON, into all the Powers of the Divine Being ; and 76.
(3) From
whence pro-
ceeds the
HOLY SPI-
RIT.

and consequently, filling Both with Infinite and most Transcendant Happiness.

77.
A TRINI-
TY in One
Being.

§. 77. And thus we see, That in One Infinite and most Simple BEING, a certain most Holy TERNARY, or Three Essential Relations of the Whole to the Whole, which Divines call Subsistences or Persons, offer themselves to our Consideration.

78.
Which is all
that's abso-
lutely neces-
sary to the
Actual and
Compleat
Happiness of
the Supreme
Being.

§. 78. And hence it appears most evidently, That in these THREE Persons, GOD is Actually, Infinitely, and in the highest Degree happy in Himself, and that He wants Nothing else to Consummate his Felicity.

79.
And is the
highest Apex
of the Deity.

All the rest
are beneath
this.

§. 79. This Most Holy and Adorable TRINITY, is therefore the most profound and most compleat Center, and the Highest Apex of the Deity. Whatever besides is Considered in GOD, is without this Center, and may be said to relate rather to the Periphery.

80.
Of which
Sort is (4)
the IDEA of
the TRINI-
TY.

§. 80. Now if we further Consider the First and Infinitely Perfect BEING, we shall find that there is yet a fourth Thing, approaching or relating to the said Periphery, that may be attributed to Him. For to

me

me 'tis evident, That besides that Real Perception, just now mention- ed, and those Divine Senses and Wis- dom, in and by which it is perform- ed, that there is also in GOD ano- ther Faculty of *Perceiving*, which I cannot distinguish by a more proper Name than that of Divine *Imagination*; wherein as in a Looking-glass, and by the Repercussion, as I may say, of the ETERNAL WORD, is form'd a most PERFECT IDEA of the TRI- NITY, most exactly Representing all the Infinite Divine Perfections thereof; and in which the Most Holy and A- dorable TRINITY Contemplates It- self and all its Own Infinite Powers, with all their Infinite and Infinitely various and Admirable Combinati- ons.

In the Di- vine Imagi- nation.

§. 81. And this Ideal Notion of GOD Himself in GOD, may there- fore in another Sense, claim the Name of OBJECTIVE WISDOM likewise, with this Difference from that beforemention'd, That 'tis not Real but Ideal and ECTYPAL only.

81.
Which Con- stitutes the Ectypal Wis- dom of GOD.

§. 82. And I think we should not do amiss, if we Interpreted the Words, *Wisd. vii. 22. & seqq. and Prov. viii.*

82.
To which some Places of Scripture may be re- ferred.

22, &

22, & *seqq.* Not of the Eternal Word Himself, who is the True *Archetypal* Wisdom of the Father; but of this Idea of the Trinity, or *Ectypal* Wisdom; or even of that also which we are now going to mention.

81.
(5) The *Scienti-*
graphical
Draught of
the Creation.

§. 83. For we must not stop here. There is yet a *fifth* Thing that's worth Observation. Hitherto I have Considered GOD as in (or abiding in) Himself. But when He determined to go forth and manifest Himself out of Himself, without all peradventure He first conceived in his Mind all those most beautiful Worlds that He was to make, and delineated within Himself the first Draught of all Things that He resolved to create. And seeing such Things depended merely upon his own Will, we shall call this previous Idea in GOD of Things future, by the Name of *Arbitrary Conception*. And in this Respect the Divine Understanding is wholly *Active*, not only in itself, but also in regard of the Things it comprehends.

Arbitrary
Conception.

Active Un-
derstanding.

84.
Wherein He
knowsall his
Creatures *a*
priori.

§. 84. And in this *Arbitrary Conception* GOD most adequately understands and knows *a priori* all his Creatures. He sees all their Relations one to another; the End and Design of their

their Creation ; all the Means, &c. and He most perfectly knows how to govern them.

§. 85. Hence this Arbitrary Idea or Conception of the Creatures may also in a *third* Sense, be called OBJECTIVE WISDOM; which for distinction's sake we shall term SCI-AGRAPHICAL.

85.
Which may be called the Sciagraphical Wisdom of GOD.

§. 86. And thus we observe in GOD THE FATHER that Central Tendency or Power of Willing; or, in one Word, That Infinite Desire to an Infinite Object. And in this we observe again, (1) Divine Sens: (2) A Passive Understanding, which we call first and Radical Wisdom: But others, if I mistake not, call it *Magia*: (3) A Capacity of Infinite Love and Joy; all which are most Central and constitutive of infinite Happiness. The next Thing that offers is, (4) A Divine Imagination, which is, as I may say, more External, and is therefore not included in the formal Notion of the supreme Divine Beatitude: And (5) There is a mere accessory *Active Understanding*, or rather (to prevent Cavils, as if we admitted of Accidents in the Essence of GOD) an Architectonical

86.
A Recapitulation of what we have observed in GOD the Father.

tectonical or Sciagraphical Exercise of one and the same Understanding.

87.
A Summary
Account of
the whole
Deity.

§. 87. So that the FATHER is the System, as it were, of the Eternal Divine Faculties; and the SON with the HOLY SPIRIT, is their Eternal, Inseparable, Essential and Plenary Society and Happiness. And both the *Ectypal* and *Sciagraphical* Wisdom, are, as I may say, the usual and common Entertainment (the last whereof is merely accessory too) of the Ever Blessed Trinity. (See *Prov* viii. 30.)

A Prayer.

§. 88. " Pardon, O most Merciful Father, pardon the Folly of
" One that most humbly presumes
" to speaks of Thee. For what is
" all that we can think or say of
" Thy most Highest and Super-excellent Majesty, but mere Folly, in
" comparison of the Reality that is
" in Thee! Pardon me, O Jesu, O
" most tenderly Affectionate Lord;
" seeing I have not presumed to
" treat of such Profound Mysteries out of Vanity or Ostentation;
" but only because I truly believe,
" that what I have said, will help
" to give us a clearer Knowledge of
" ourselves; and that that will serve
" as

“as a Guide to lead us into the true
“Knowledge of that Divine Faith,
“which Thou didst Teach both in
“Word and in Deed.”

§. 89. To return then to ourselves :

Seeing G O D is the Father of our Spirit, it follows, that He also begot it endued with the same Powers ; for to beget, is nothing but to multiply his own Being, such as it is, or to produce others like unto Himself.

So that by Nature, we are truly like the first Hypostasis of the Ever Blessed Trinity.

§. 90. But then you'll say, Why have you not attributed an *Active Understanding* to the supreme Spirit of Man, as you have done to G O D ?

I answer, Because I was doubtful thereof, being neither able to deny nor to affirm it : Not the latter, because I do not find within myself so clear a Testimony of such a Power, as I do of the rest ; nor the first, because it does not seem incredible but that the Father may have also communicated this accessory Feature to his Off-spring.

§. 91. But when I consider again, that the analogy between the Inferior

D 2 and

89.

The Application to ourselves ; We are by Nature like to G O D the FATHER.

90.

Obj. Why have we not attributed an *Active Understanding* to the Spirit?

91.

Which is at last granted,

and more Extrenal Parts of ourselves, which are most evidently endued with an Active Understanding, and the Superior and Innermost Ones favour this last Opinion, I cannot but likewise readily Assent thereto.

92.
But it is only
an accessory
Faculty.

§. 92. But be it as it will; this is most certain, That if the Spirit of Man be endu'd with such an *Active Understanding*, it is a very superficial and merely accessory Faculty; which therefore does not in the least contribute to our true and essential Felicity. For where would be the Happiness in inventing and framing various Images, if the other Faculties should be deprived of, and tormented with an insatiable Hunger after their own lively and adequate Objects.

93.
GOD Himself
really
fills all our
Divine Faculties,
and thereby perfects
the Image of God
in us.

* Sect. 73-
76.

§. 93. Wherefore, as GOD the Father Himself is only Happy in his Eternal Son thro' the Holy Spirit of Love proceeding from Both*; so likewise, in order to render that Image of GOD in us compleat in every respect, and that Men may fully obtain the End for which they were made, it is not agreeable to the immense Love of GOD towards his own Creature and Off-spring, to endue it with those Divine Faculties, unless

unless He also vouchsafe to unite Himself infinitely unto 'em, to fill them with his own Substance; to dwell wholly in them Himself; to live in them; and to communicate and impart his own Life to them; that so Man may infinitely, and in an infinite number of Ways *feel* and *understand* his GOD himself, and in a most transcendent and ineffable transport of Love, most willingly and with all possible Satisfaction and Delight Rejoyce in and through Him: (§. 52, 53, 60, 62.)

§. 94. This gracious inhabitation or indwelling of GOD in the supreme Spirit, we shall for distinction's sake, call the Gift of GRACE; 94. and the *supreme* Spirit itself with all its Faculties, in as much as it is one of the constituent Parts of Man, made to subsist to all Eternity, we shall call (seeing a more convenient Name does not occur) the Gift of NATURE. GRACE. NATURE Tho' otherwise, I know, some use the Word *Nature* in a very different Sense.

§. 95. But before we proceed, we must make a yet stricter Enquiry into the Nature of this our supreme Spirit. And indeed, that all those Di- 95. Our Divine vine Faculties are proportioned to their Objects: and

consequently
are truly Di-
vine.

vine Faculties are proportioned to their Objects; that they are suited to them; and that they are like to those that are in GOD Himself; whereby He both perceives and is delighted in Himself; and consequently, that our supreme Spirit is indeed something Divine, and derived from the very Substance of GOD, who but the most Ignorant or most Obstinate of Men can deny?

96.
Which is
proved by
Arguments
*a minori ad
majus.*

§. 96. Can the Ear taste, or the Eye hear; or can an Ass understand Mathematical Demonstrations?

And is not the distance or disproportion between GOD and the Things of this World, much more, or rather infinitely greater, than between the Qualities of one and the same Object, which yet can only strike and affect the Senses that are by Nature adapted to them respectively? And if Mathematical Demonstrations transcend the Capacity of an Ass, yea, and of very many Men also, how much more must GOD Himself transcend the Natural Capacities of every Mortal?

How then can the supreme Spirit of Man perceive and understand the Things of GOD, and take delight
in

in them in a divine Manner, if it be not naturally endued with Faculties specially and peculiarly adapted to that Purpose, which consequently must needs be truly Divine?

§. 97. Moreover, it is evident from the Consideration of the outward Senses, as I have already hinted, that the Objects of one Faculty, do not strike nor affect the other Faculties that are not adapted to them.

97.
The Objects of one Faculty do not affect any of the other Faculties.

Thus the Objects of Light, considered as such, do not affect the Ears, nor excite Hearing in us; and so of the Rest.

§. 98. As GOD therefore is the most Highest of all Beings, and infinitely different from all his Creatures, we cannot but infer *a fortiori*, That those Faculties which He has made and specially adapted to receive and enjoy Himself, are such as no Creature can ever reach, nor excite in them any Sensation, Apprehension, or Joy truly Divine.

98.
Therefore much more may we say, That no Creature can ever possibly affect or touch our Divine Faculties.

§. 99. So that this our supreme Spirit, being by Nature exempted from all Correspondence with every other Creature, how excellent soever; is the proper Habitation and Dwelling-place of GOD alone.

99.
Our Spirit is consecrated to GOD alone.

100.
Which few
duely Consi-
der.

§. 100. But to our Shame be it said! Who Considers, who sufficiently Considers the great Dignity of this Spirit that we are endued with? Where is the Man that seriously and with a thankful Mind Reflects on this high and most excellent Privilege of his Nature; or that sincerely applies himself to keep the Temple of the Most Holy Trinity, pure and undefiled, as he ought to do?

101
The Divine
Senses and
Understand-
ing are pas-
sive;

§. 101. Now seeing GOD cannot be otherwise felt nor understood, but as He is truly in Himself, and seeing that wholly depends upon the real Communication of Himself, and the Irradiation of his Own Substantial Light into those Faculties, 'tis evident, that the Senses and divine Understanding of the supreme Spirit are merely *Passive*, and that they only perceive Divine Things simply as they are in themselves, and as they are thro' Divine Favour presented to them; and consequently, that they can neither add nor diminish any thing; neither err nor differ from others that enjoy the same Measure of Divine Light; no more than Men can differ about the same common Sensations, as for Instance, That
the

So that Per-
sons that en-
joy the same
degree of
Light can
neither err
nor differ
one from an-
other.

the Sun appears to them all alike, round and luminous, and that they equally feel his Heat, when in a clear Day they expose themselves to the Influence of his Rays.

§. 102. And hence it evidently appears, That such divine Notices and real Communications *wholly* depend upon, and must be believed upon the Credit of *their own Evidence*, which is irresistible, and not in the least liable to any Error or Illusion; and that whosoever tastes and enjoys them, cannot if he would, tbo' all the World and all the Hosts of Heaven should gain-say him; doubt of the truth of 'em.

102.
Divine Notices must be believed upon the sole Credit of their own Evidence.

§. 103. Do we not observe, That Things Corporeal, which we see and perceive with our Outward Senses, and that there Relations and Qualities, how vain and perishable soever they be, do yet beget in us such certainty, that we cannot suffer ourselves in any wise to doubt thereof, nor be persuaded to the contrary; and can we be so unreasonable as to deny the same Privilege to that Infinite, Eternal, and most Real Being, from whom they have most liberally received whatever they have? Shall we deny Him the privilege of

103.
Proved by Arguments *a minori ad majus*.

shining by his own Light, and of imprinting by the Help of that alone, a clear and irresistible Conviction upon our Minds? This, surely, would be the greatest of all Absurdities!

104.

The Operations of GOD are known by such Marks as are suitable and peculiar to his Majesty.

§. 104. Or, is GOD and the Creature so like one another, that 'tis to be feared we cannot certainly distinguish the Operations of one from the other? This is as much as to suggest, that the Communications of GOD, who is infinitely Perfect, and who infinitely transcends all Creatures in Majesty and Excellence, do not carry along with them Marks worthy of his Highness, and which by their unconceivable Brightness, like the Sun at Noon with respect to the Stars, darken and swallow up all the Operations of all Creatures, how sublime and luminous soever!

105.

His Acts partake of all his Attributes.

§. 105. O blind, foolish, and deceitful shallow Reason, into what sort of an Idol wilt thou at last transform the Living and Omnipotent GOD, whose all and every Act cannot but partake of all his Attributes?

106.

No Creature can fully imitate GOD.

§. 106. GOD always Acts as GOD, and seeing no Creature can ever become truly God; so consequently, no Creature can ever truly act as GOD:

Nor

Nor can any Creature so imitate Him, as that His Operations shall not infinitely transcend theirs: So that whosoever truly experiences the Divine Operations in their own Purity, may easily and without any danger of mistake, discern them from such as are produced by the Creature.

§. 107. Let us now compare our divine Understanding and Reason together, that so we may thereby be the better enabled to judge, Whether possibly they be one and the same Thing.

107
A Comparison between the Divine Understanding and Reason.

First then, Reason is solely conversant about the Creatures, or rather about the Ideas and Images that they imprint, or that we ourselves form in the Imagination; (§. 45.) none of which can in the least reach or affect our Divine Understanding, (§. 98.) *Secondly*, Reason consists wholly in *Action*, (§. 45.) But the Divine Understanding is merely *Passive*, (§. 101.) *Thirdly*, The Divine Understanding receives Things calmly, as they are presented to it, and the *Archetypal*, *Ectypal*, and *Sciagraphical* Wisdom of GOD are the immediate Objects thereof, and the Substantial Light of GOD itself, is the Medium or Means in and through which

which it perceives and understands them, (§. 91, 101.) But Reason being employed about the Ideas of Things absent, or which itself has formed, is full of labour and trouble, and wastes and impairs the Strength and Vigor both of Body and Mind, (§. 45.) Finally, as Reason is uncertain, doubtful, inconstant, changeable, and differing and at variance with itself, and leading its Followers some one Way and some another, as from the sad Experience of all Ages to this Day, does more than sufficiently appear; so on the other hand, our Divine Understanding, being irradiated with divine Light, is perfectly steady, free from all doubts, always consistent with itself, the same in all Persons, and in no wise liable to any Error, (§. 101, 106.)

Reason is a distinct Faculty, and inferior to the Divine Understanding.

And hence I conceive we may safely and without hesitation conclude, That Reason is a Faculty altogether different from, and much inferior to our Divine Understanding; that it is solely adapted to the Creature, wholly unfit for Divine Things, and perfectly incapable of any immediate, pure, and divine Influence.

Of the Definition of Faith.

61

§. 108. And to say all in one Word, REASON is our *Active Understanding*, viz. That *outward* one adapted to this Visible World, and given us for the Use of this Mortal Life.

108.
It is our Ex-
ternal Active
Understand-
ing.

§. 109. Nor can it comprehend or have any Relation to the *Inward* Understanding, which can only be referred to the Invisible World and the *Inward* Senses.

109.
Not that
which is In-
ternal.

For Reason is common to all Men; who therefore have defined them- selves to be *Reasonable* Animals. But scarce shall we find One among ma- ny Millions, to whom in this Life its granted to use his Inward Senses, and the Understanding correspond- ing to them.

§. 110. And in like manner 'tis evident, That neither does Reason belong to the *Innermost* Understand- ing. For even here, there are but very few that sufficiently advert to themselves, and observe the Influxes of Divine Light, so as from thence to take occasion to form new Ideas. But every One in some Measure, and very often the most Wicked, and such as are wholly void of all Spirit- ual Knowledge, are the greatest Proficients in Reason.

110.
Nor the In-
nermost.

§. 111.

III.
Or, It is the
Intellectual
Light of cor-
rupted Na-
ture.

§. 111. But if you had rather have it, that Reason is not the Intellect itself that understands, but the Light in and through which it understands; I shall not dispute it. For then Reason may be defined to be the Intellectual Light of Nature, I say, of Nature corrupted, because that themost Degenerate Part of Mankind enjoy the Use thereof, as much, and oftentimes more than the Best, as CHRIST himself witnesseth in the Parable of the Unjust Steward, where He declares, That the Children of this World are in their Generation, wiser than the Children of Light, Luke, ch. xvi. 8.

II2.
So that it
cannot know
Things Su-
pernatural.

§. 112. Now to say, That Things, not only such as relate to Uncorrupted and Angelical Nature, but that Things Supernatural and merely Divine, can be truly comprehended by the Light of corrupted Nature, is not only much more absurd, than to affirm, that a Hog can learn Music, but is moreover, a manifest Contradiction in Terms. For whatsoever is Supernatural, transcends the Capacity, and is beyond the Sphere and Activity of Nature. How then can Natural Light Comprehend Things

Things Divine, which infinitely transcend Nature itself?

§. 113. All then that Reason can do, as to Divine Things, is comprehended within these narrow Bounds, *viz.* As all Outward Things are Types and Expressions of Invisible Ones: So Reason assisted by the Impressions of Things formerly made upon the Senses, and by the help of their Images imprinted on the Imagination, may form to itself certain Ideas and Images of Things Invisible, and variously dispose, consider, compound, divide, and make Deductions from 'em; and thereby, according to its usual Custom, divert itself with its own Fancies and Inventions; all which may represent the truth of the Matter more or less, in proportion to the Propriety and Congruity of our Notions to the Nature of Things. Whence it follows, That the more confused and obscure our Reason is, the more confused, dark and absurd Notions of Spiritual Things does it form to itself, upon which sandy Foundation it builds (with the Fool in the Gospel) the whole Edifice of Spirituality, and then obstinately fights for it, as for Religion and Liberty,

113.

What Reason can do in Divine Matters.

erty, until the Rain descend, and the Floods come; and the Winds blow and beat upon that House; for then it falls, and great is the fall thereof.

§. 114. But admitting, That these Rational Notions of Spiritual Things were as exact as possible; they would still be but *Pictures*, and nothing else; and consequently, would be vastly different from the Truth and from the Life. Why then should we expect from them, what they have not to give, Life and Substance? And yet without these, that Central Hunger in us, that alone Source of Eternal Happiness, or most Dreadful Misery, can never be satisfied, (§. 56, 59, 60, 93.)

114.
The Ideas of Reason, tho never so exact, are yet but mere Pictures, void of Life.

§. 115. Setting aside Reason then, as wholly insufficient, empty, barren and ensnaring; we want another Guide, some more Substantial Nourishment; namely, GOD Himself, GOD living in us, (§. 93.)

115.
We want another Guide, some other Nourishment, namely, GOD Himself.

We are not now in that State wherein Man was Created.

But you'll say, We experience no such Thing. *Answer* I grant, 'tis even so indeed: And from thence we must infallibly conclude, That we are not now in that State, wherein Man was at first created.

We

We will therefore first enquire into the Cause of this Evil, and then shew the Remedy.

§. 116. First then, 'Tis evident, ^{116.} that this Defect, cannot in any wise, ^{GOD is not} nor in any sense, proceed from the ^{the Cause} Will of GOD, (52, 54.) ^{thereof.}

§. 117. For it is the greatest Im- ^{117.} possibility, and the grossest Contra- ^{Because no-} diction that can be, to imagine, that ^{thing Evil} GOD, who is Infinite Goodness it- ^{can possibly} self, can positively Will or Permit any ^{proceed} Thing, that in any wise, in any ^{from Him.} sense, or at any time, is evil, or hurt- ful to any Thing.

§. 118. But the greatest of all E- ^{118.} vils, is, for a Man to have Faculries ^{But to want} exquisitely sensible, and solely adap- ^{GOD is the} ted to, and eternally and most ar- ^{greatest E-} dently hungering and thirsting after ^{vil.} GOD Himself; and yet nevertheless to continue wholly empty and void of the said adequate and most desira- ble Object.

§. 119. To affirm then, or even ^{119.} to surmise, That GOD is the Cause ^{Which we} of such a miserable, and never enough ^{cannot} to be lamented Misfortune, would be ^{charge upon} a very Wicked Thing: Such a Sug- ^{Him, with-} gestion would highly reflect upon, ^{out im-} and utterly subvert all His Glorious ^{peaching his} ^{Justice,} ^{Goodness &} ^{Wisdom.} and

and Harmonious Attributes of Justice, Goodness and Wisdom; so far is the other Opinion from being true, *viz.* That such a Thing ought to have happened, in order to manifest, (which is the Pretence wherewith they endeavour to palliate their Blasphemy) all those Divine Qualities.

120.
The sole Cause of our Misery consists in our choosing to turn from GOD to the Creatures.

§. 120. We must therefore conclude, That Man having most basely abused that most excellent Gift of LIBERTY, whereby he was at first enabled absolutely and eternally to moderate and govern his own Faculties, did thereupon, and still continues to turn away those his Divine Powers from their proper Object, even from GOD Himself, who Alone is able to fill and satisfy them; and that instead thereof, he has placed them upon much lower, and infinitely disproportionate Objects; namely, upon the Creatures.

121.
As long as this Cause continues, the same effect will ensue; namely, the privation of the Divine Presence.

§. 121. And as long as this Deploable Cause subsists, so long will the same dreadful Effect continue; namely, the privation and loss of the Divine Presence.

122.
The Divine Justice requires it.

§. 122. For that most Excellent Blessing of having the Divine Light dwelling in us, neither ought, nor can

can be obtruded upon us against our Will. For if the Eye upon its being shut, neither does nor can admit the Light of the Sun, it is surely much more agreeable to the most high Dignity and Justice of GOD, to deprive a Mind of his own Beatific Light, which turns itself away from Him.

§. 123. And I am bold to add, That, supposing GOD could set aside that regard to his own Dignity and Justice; yet is there, in the nature of the Thing itself, an utter Impossibility that any Spirit can be united to GOD, and made Happy by such an Union, unless it freely and of its own accord turn and cleave to Him.

§. 124. For the Will is the Innermost Center and *Primum Mobile* of every Spirit. What then is a Conjunction of Spirits, without an Union of Wills; but a mere Contradiction *in Adjecto*?

§. 125. And who ever dreamed, That any Man can be really delighted with any thing that happens to him against his Will? Or, that any One can truly rejoyce, but he that obtains his Desires.

123.
And must be so in the nature of the Thing.

124.
Because it implies a Contradiction to, be united to God, and not to adhere to Him with the Will.

125.
Nor does he rejoyce, but who obtains his Desires.

126.
And consequently he would not rejoyce in GOD who had not desired Him.

127.
But would rather be tormented.

128.
So that the Devil would suffer the greatest torments in the Throne of CHRIST.

129.
'Tis therefore absolutely necessary to remove this Cause, and constantly to turn all our Superior Faculties to GOD alone.

§. 126. Therefore if any Man does not desire GOD, as is supposed, (§. 123.) How can he be delighted in and with GOD? How can a Divine Union, or Communication and Intercourse contribute to his Happiness?

§. 127. Surely, nothing that we suffer against our Will, can produce and raise in us Joy and Gladness, but on the contrary must necessarily occasion Irksomeness, Grief and Anxiety.

§. 128. And in this View it is, that many have confidently affirm'd, That the Devil, if it could possibly happen, that he could seat himself in the Glorious Throne of CHRIST, would suffer much more intollerable Pains there, then in the lowest Pit of Hell.

§. 129. So that 'tis absolutely necessary to remove this most wicked Cause, and to destroy this sole, but (wo is me!) most fruitful Root of all Evil in us: I mean, the Application and Conversion of our Superior Faculties to any Creature: This we must fully and in reality resolve to do with all our Might, by withdrawing all those Faculties from every Creature, and placing them truly and in-

deed,

deed, and wholly, and constantly upon GOD, and perpetually adhering to Him alone; that so finally, we may truly and at all Times, and on all Occasions, Will or not Will as He does, and enjoy a true and solid Communion with Him; without which there can be no true Happiness.

§. 130. For any Person to persuade himself otherwise; or to invent any other Way of Salvation, or to flatter himself, that his Case ever will or can admit of the least Abatement or Indulgence in this respect, is a most vain and absurd, a most deceitful and pernicious Delusion of Reason.

§. 131. But its easier to point out the Cause than to find out the Remedy for this Evil. For whosoever shall but attentively Examine his own Breast, will find himself full of so many and such great Infirmities, that he will be utterly at a loss, where to turn himself, where to go, or how to look for and find out a Deliverance. He will find himself plunged into the thickest Darkness; Destitute of all Strength; exposed on all sides, both outwardly and inwardly, to the most violent

Nothing of this can possibly be dispensed with.

131. But to do it of ourselves; we want both Light and Strength.

violent Temptations; and wholly Enslaved to their Rage and Fury.

132.
The Reason
of this, Our
Inability,
the Corrup-
tion of our
whole be-
ing.

§. 132. Nor can it be otherwise For, from the time that Man turned away his Divine Faculties from the true Sovereign Good, which is GOD alone, and by that means most unhappily Perverted the whole Order of Nature; these Superior Powers, as they are by Nature most lively and active, being deprived of their proper Object, and yet most vehemently but in vain seeking some other Good, wherewith to fill and satisfy themselves, could not but be more and more Involved in the thickest Darkness, and Tormented with the sharpest Pains, upon the terrible Discovery of their own Emptiness and Disappointments. And seeing the superior Faculties were by Nature appointed to Preside over and Govern the Inferior ones, they could not but draw these along with them into the same Confusion, and consequently into the same wretched Abyss of Misery: Whereupon there could not but ensue a True, Real, Thorough and Universal Corruption of our whole Being, Spirit Soul and Body.

§. 133. Nor

§. 133. Nor is there any thing in Man that could in the least Contribute to his Recovery from that Miserable State. For, when once the most active Powers of Nature had taken a wrong Byass, and rejected and despised all the sweetest Tyes of Harmony, that Order and just Proportion of all Things, could not but from thenceforward be daily more and more subverted, and the whole Course of Nature confounded and turned upside down.

133. No hope of Recovery on the part of Man.

§. 134. And seeing Experience, (which is also the Mistress of Fools) as well as the Unanimous Opinion of all the Learned assures us, that Habits take their rise from repeated Acts, and that the longer and oftner we repeat them, the deeper root the Habit takes in us.

334. Because the oftner the Acts are repeated, the stronger the Habit grows.

§. 135. Who can possibly imagine, That those Eternal and most Active Powers, when once they had taken a wrong Byass, and forsaken and gone astray from the true Center of their Happiness, could ever in process of time, and of their own accord, recover themselves from such Confusion, and Return to their primitive and most beautiful Order again?

335. So that Nature cannot in any course of time come of itself to Order again.

§. 136.

136.

Therefore
there was no
hope of re-
covery nei-
ther on the
part of Man,
nor from the
accidents of
Time.

§. 136. So that consequently, it was neither in the Power of Man to help himself; nor could the Accidents of Time in any wise contribute to his Recovery.

137.

Which eve-
ry One's Ex-
perience
may con-
vince him of.

§. 137. And this Truth any One will easily Believe, without the help of any Deduction, if he but make a Tryal upon himself, and attempt to root out any one evil Custom (which by long Use is, as I may say, turned into a second Nature) and endeavour to substitute the contrary Vertue in its stead.

138.

Another
Reason of
this Impos-
sibility.

§. 138. But there is yet another Reason of this Impossibility.

139.

The Happi-
ness of Man.

§. 139. Which is this: The Happiness of Man solely consists in this, That GOD Himself dwell in his Spirit; and that He fill and satiate all his Faculties with his Light or Eternal Word, and with his Holy Spirit of Love, (§. 93.)

140.

Is the Gift
of GOD.

§. 140. But this is not in our Power; but is wholly the Gift of Divine Grace; which none will deny, but such only as take pride in the greatest Folly.

141.

Requisites to
make Con-
version pos-
sible.

§. 141. In order therefore to enable Man to turn himself truly and wholly from the Creatures to GOD,
and

and continually to adhere to Him with all the Faculties of his Spirit (as is absolutely necessary, §. 129.) it is requisite (1) That GOD offer Himself again, and knock at the Door of the Heart, and enter thereinto, if Man will open it to Him. (2) That He afford it both Light to know, and Strength to adhere to its true Good, provided it be willing so to do. (3) That He either restrain or moderate all the Assaults of its Enemies, least it should against its Will sink under them. (4) That the same GOD restore all Things to their primitive Order. And Lastly (5) That, upon the Accomplishment of this New Creation, He bestow upon Man the full Enjoyment of Himself. All which are included in, and make up the true Notion of GRACE.

§. 142. To which alone we are indebted, that we do not now feel all our Miseries so sensibly, as we have represented them, (§. 131, 132.)

§. 143. So that the most High and most Merciful GOD Himself is alone the Beginning, the Means, and the End of all this Work; and of Man Nothing is required but to accept such great Grace, to acknowledge it as

E

such,

GRACE
what?

142.
Why we do not at present feel our Miseries in the most sensible manner.

143.
GOD the Beginning, the Means, and the End of Salvation.

What is required of Man? To resign himself by Faith to GOD.

such, sincerely to turn his divine Faculties that way, and to commit himself wholly and with all possible Assurance to the FAITH of so Good and Gracious a GOD. And this Naturally leads us to give a more full and exact Description of FAITH.

144.
GOD alone is both desirous, and able, to restore Man.

§. 144. For to Man encompassed with such Difficulties, there cannot be a more Faithful Friend than GOD; who as He is infinitely MERCIFUL, is Willing; as He is infinitely WISE, knows best how; as He is transcendently POWERFUL and HAPPY in Himself, can alone restore and make him whole again; and who, finally, in regard of his own exceeding great VERACITY, will indeed do it.

145.
And has promised that He will do it.

And as a Pledge and Earnest of his Promise He has given us his own Substantial LIGHT.

§. 145. GOD therefore taking this Admirable and most Miraculous Work of Restitution upon Himself, has pledged his Faith, that He will compleatly and most assuredly perfect it: And as an Earnest thereof, He has darted, and (as I may say) incorporated into the dark Fund of Man a SPARK of his own Omnipotent SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT; that so Man might have within himself all that He wanted, viz. The whole Kingdom of GOD in a little Grain of Seed;

Seed; which, according as Man voluntarily opens himself like the good Ground, to let it take deeper Root, and to receive its Divine Influences, does in the Course of Time grow up and display itself still more and more.

§. 146. And this Spark of Divine Light, is that self-same Substantial Light, that Eternal Word of GOD, which constitutes the Glorious Kingdom of GOD in GOD, and his Supreme Happiness: The One is fixed, as I may say, in the Center of the Soul, as a Model of the other.

146:
Which is the Divine Word itself, which constitutes the supreme Beatitude in GOD.

§. 147. And even the visible World furnishes us with an Instance of the like Nature, and with a Type of the same Thing; as is evident from the *Bononian* Stone, which so imbibes and retains the Solar Rays within itself, that being carry'd into a dark Place, it shines there, and sends forth a very copious Light.

147.
Is illustrated by an Example.

§. 148. This Spark of Divine Light, being cast, like Seed into the Ground of the Heart; or, that Eternal and living substantial Word of GOD graciously breathed by the Eternal FATHER into the innermost Fund of the Supreme Spirit, is the immediate and inward Worker and Finisher of

148.
This Divine Light is the internal efficient Cause of our Salvation and Re-novation.

our Salvation, and the Omnipotent Repairer of our most lamentably depraved Nature: This it is, which through a most wonderful and inef-
fable Contrivance of Divine Mercy, Wisdom, Power, Superabundance and Truth, and in a most exuberant Manner, does really and truly repair and restore whatever is in us burst, broken, bruised, awry, crooked, con-
fused, extinct, or any otherwise contrary to, or inconsistent with our Pri-
mitive State of Creation, to the eter-
nal Glory of the Super-excellent and most Holy Trinity.

§. 149. And that this Work can-
not be performed by any other Agent,
nor in any other Way; and that Man
cannot obtain the End for which he
was created by any other Means, is
as evident, as the Sun at Noon-day,
from what we have already advanced,
and in particular, from §. 29, 93,
129, 130, 141.

§. 150. That the Case is really so, and
That that divine Seed is out of infinite
and mere Mercy sown in us, is suffi-
ciently evident from hence; In that
so long as our Faculties are left solely
to themselves, and continue empty
and wholly void of their own proper
luminous

150.
Without
this Light,
we could not
so much as
think, much
less do any
good Thing.

luminous Object; that is to say, That without a good and luminous Principle in us, we cannot so much as think a good Thought, and much less do any good Thing of ourselves, (§. 131-140.)

§. 151. But the History of all Ages, and even the present Times, afford many illustrious Instances of singular Piety, and most approved Vertue which can be derived from Nothing but a heavenly Principle.

151. Which is contrary to Experience: For there have been and still are many living Instances of Piety.

§. 152. And this the Experience of every individual Person ought in some measure to confirm, except such (if any such there be) as, having shaken off all Sense of Shame and Piety, are become a mere Sink of Vice.

152. Nor can any One deny it without Reflecting upon himself.

§. 153. There is then indeed, a Portion of divine Light in us, which is the Pledge of GOD's Promise for our Salvation, and the sacred Earnest of divine Love:

153. This Portion of Divine Light in us;

§. 154. And this Living and Substantial Light of GOD in us, is, in one Sense, call'd FAITH.

154. Is called FAITH.

§. 155. Which therefore, St. Paul, that most excellent Expounder of Faith, has most exactly and most admirably well described in a few Words, Heb. ch. xi. 1. to be,

155. Whence the Meaning of that Place to the Hebrews, ch. xi. 1. is evident.

The Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen. Because that Divine Light does really, truly, and substantially contain in itself all that we can hope for; and is a sure Proof, that all such Things as do not now appear, but which we shall afterwards see to all Eternity, are really and truly given us *now*; and consequently, that the whole Kingdom of GOD is now in us, and lies hidden in the Heart as in a Grain * of Seed: So that all that remains for us to do, is, to resign ourselves wholly and sincerely into the Hands of GOD, and to suffer Him out of his Infinite Goodness and Mercy to water the same with his continual divine Influences; and then we may rest assured that it will more and more display, and, finally, in due Time fully manifest itself.

* *Matth. ch. xiii. 31.*

156.
Faith as it is the Gift of GOD.

§. 156. Such a Thing then is FAITH; as it is the real and substantial Gift of GOD.

157.
The Notion of Faith, as it is a Duty incumbent upon Man.

§. 157. But as Faith (or Fidelity) requires and calls for suitable Returns of Faith (or Fidelity): So in like Manner, that free and spontaneous Acknowledgment and Acceptance of so great a Favour; that fiducial and entire

entire Surrendry of ourselves into the Hands of our most loving Redeemer; that faithful and real Conversion of all our divine Faculties from all the Creatures to the * Creator only, and the constant Exercise and Imployment of ourselves therein, is that, which in another Sense, and as it denotes the Duty of Man, is called FAITH.

§. 158. We are Saved then by Faith alone, and Justified by Faith alone, in the complex Sense of the Word, viz. By Faith, in the first Sense, as it is the efficient and formal Cause; and in the other, as it is a Condition *sine qua non*; without which that divine efficient Cause can never operate nor exert itself to our Justification and Salvation.

§. 159. And indeed, that FAITH, as it is the substantial Light of GOD, is the efficient Cause of our Salvation and Righteousness, is evident from §. 153--157. And that 'tis likewise the formal Cause, or that wherein the very Nature and Essence of our Salvation and Righteousness consists, is also evident from §. 93.

§. 160. For our Perfection, Accomplishment, Dignity, Honour, Glory,

* Sect. 129.
130.

158.
We are Justified by Faith alone.

159.
Faith in the first Sense, is both the efficient and formal Cause of our Salvation and Righteousness.

160.
For our Happiness consists in

the alone enjoyment of
G O D.

Glory, and Happiness, consists in Enjoying G O D Himself, (§. 93.)

161.

After a divine manner.

§. 161. But we cannot enjoy GOD otherwise than He enjoys Himself.

162.

GOD enjoys Himself in the Divine Word.

§. 162. Now He enjoys Himself in his Son, (§. 73--76.) in his Word, in his Light. This Light is the Glory, the Majesty, the Dignity, and, as I may say, the Form of the Deity Itself, whereby GOD is GOD, and without which, if He could be divested thereof, as He cannot, He would be the most unhappy of all Beings, (§. 70.)

163.

Who therefore constitutes the Divine Image in us.

§. 163. The same divine Light then dwelling in, and fixed, as it were, in the Center, and from thence penetrating, ringing, and irradiating the whole Sphere of our Being with its divine Beams, does solely constitute the Form of the Divine Image in us, and makes us truly like unto G O D.

164.

But our Righteousness consists in this Image.

§. 164. It cannot then be doubted, but that our Righteousness consists in Our having this Divine Image in us; if it be considered that we no sooner lose the said Image, but that thereupon we immediately cease to be righteous.

§. 165.

§. 165. Therefore Divine Light, which is true FAITH, as it is that wherein our Similitude with GOD formally consists; so likewise does it formally constitute our Righteousness.

165.
Therefore
Righteous-
ness consists
in the Light
of GOD in
us, which is
Faith.

§. 166. And as at the Creation, that divine Similitude in us, tho' truly the Gift of GOD, was yet esteemed as our own, and was our Portion, wherewith GOD endued his own Creature, in order to make it truly like Himself, and to qualify it to be a fit Spouse for Himself; and consequently, as that Divine Light, which is that very Image of GOD in us, was no longer considered by GOD as in and of Himself, but as in, and belonging to us:

166.
As the di-
vine Image
was at first
imputed to
us as our
own;

§. 167. So, in like manner, the same Light, which is mercifully given us anew, as a Pledge and Earnest of Divine Faith, and which is therefore called FAITH, (§. 154.) And which by its own inward, powerful and universal Influence restores that Righteousness which we had lost, and which is the sole efficient and formal Cause thereof, (§. 163, 165.) is not now considered, as of and in GOD, but as in us, and as our own,

167.
So likewise
the same Im-
age restor-
ed in us by
Faith, which
is our
Righteous-
ness, is im-
puted to us
as truly
ours.

and as our Righteousness, whereby we become really just, and may truly be so called.

168.
St. Paul says
the same,
Rom. iv. 3,
seqq. & Phil.
iii. 9.

§. 168. And this is what the Apostle St. Paul, in that famous Place, Rom. ch. iv. 3, &c. Phil. ch. iii. 9. affirms, *That Faith is counted unto us for Righteousness*; that is, That tho' FAITH in its own Nature, be not our own, but the Righteousness of GOD; yet may it be imputed to us, and looked upon as our own; because GOD has given it to us as a free Gift, and consequently, made it our own proper Righteousness, in order to cover our Nakedness, and to cloath us with that Wedding Garment, in which alone we can please Him.

169.
This Righteousness of GOD thro' Faith, is real and inherent in us.

§. 169. This, then, is that *Righteousness of God which is of Faith*; real, inherent, subjective, and truly our own; but neither of ourselves, nor by our own Strength produced; but wholly owing to the gracious Gift and Imputation of GOD; whence in this Sense, it is always GOD's, how much soever it be our own in the former.

170.
It is not imputed to us because of our Merits or good Works.

§. 170. But this great Dowry, this inestimable Jewel, FAITH, Why is it accounted to us for Righteousness; why is it looked upon

upon, and accepted as our Righteousness? Is it because of our Works, or for any Merit on our Part? No, by no means. For we cannot do the least good Thing, but in and by the Help of this FAITH itself (§. 150.) So that good Works necessarily presuppose this divine FAITH living and flourishing in us: How then could they merit IT?

§. 171. It is therefore the free Gift of GOD alone, and 'tis looked upon and accepted as our Righteousness, because we *believed* and trusted in GOD; that is, Because we approved and accepted of that most excellent Benefit and Gift with a thankful Mind; because we believed and placed all our Confidence in the Mercy and Promises of GOD, and faithfully surrentred and resign'd ourselves into his most Merciful Hands, to do with us in all Things as He, in his Infinite Good Pleasure, should think fit. This is to BELIEVE and trust in GOD, §. 157.

§. 172. Thus Abraham believed GOD, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness. So that FAITH, in the second Sense of the Word, is only the external moving Cause, and the

171.

But is the free Gift of GOD, conferred upon us in Consequence of our Faith in the other Sense of the Word.

To believe and trust in GOD, What?

172.

Thus Abraham believed. This Faith is the external moving Cause and an indif-

penfable condition, without which the Righteousness of Faith cannot be imputed to us.

173.
Faith therefore is all in all in the Work of Salvation.

the Condition, *sine qua non*, without which GOD cannot bestow upon us, nor give us any Propriety in that transcendent Gift, the Righteousness of FAITH.

§. 173. And thus FAITH is the efficient Cause, the Means, the End, and every Thing in the Work of our Salvation: yea, it is our Salvation itself, as well as our Sanctification and Justification: For these Three, like inseparable Companions, go Hand in Hand together, and wholly consist in that Divine FAITH alone.

174.
This Light of Faith is in all Men.

• Johnch. i. ry

§. 174. This *Faith*, this *Light*, this *Word of Faith*, is in some measure communicated to all Men: *Every Man that cometh into the World is enlightened by it; it shineth in Darkness, and the Darkness (for the most Part) receiveth it not: But as many as receive it, to them He gives Power to become the Sons of God; and this Light is the Life of Men, (§. 144—152.) viz. That supernatural Life, without which the natural Life would be spent in continual and most intolerable Pains; partly in this Life, but chiefly in that which is to come, after the last Separation of the Good from*

from the Wicked, at the End of the World.

§. 175. The *Just* therefore lives only by his FAITH, *Heb. ch. x. 38.* 175. The *Just* lives by Faith.

§. 176. And to this FAITH, it is solely owing that we have yet any Sense of GOD, or any Sort or Degree of Knowledge of Him. It is *That* which moves, convinces, and draws the Heart, and even extorts (if I may use that Expression) our Assent to divine Truth, tho' at the same Time we do not speculatively comprehend it, (§. 98.) 176. From this Faith alone we learn the true Knowledge of GOD.

§. 177. The same Faith also opens and illuminates the spiritual Eye of the Mind, and enables it clearly to see and understand Things Spiritual, and to compare them one with another. For divine Things cannot be perceived, but by divine Faculties; and these being such as no Creature can act upon; it follows, that they cannot be inwardly affected nor convinced any other Way, but by this divine Light alone, (§. 98.) 177. And of Things Spiritual.

§. 178. Finally, This FAITH rests and depends solely upon its own Certainty and Evidence; so that whosoever really possesses and enjoys the same, 178. It depends solely upon its own Evidence.

same, he stands in need of no other Authority whereupon to ground his Belief, (§. 102—106.)

179.
For as Sensations produced by External Objects are self-evident;

§. 179. For as he that at Noon-Day sees or perceives any Thing, does not want any other Authority to persuade him That he sees and perceives the Things that he actually does see and perceive ;

180.
So likewise are those produced by the Irradiation of divine Light in the supreme Spirit.

§. 180. In like manner, whosoever has the innermost Fund of his Spirit irradiated with Divine Light, in how obscure a Manner soever it may be as to his intellectual Sight, he will yet nevertheless but very little (or not at all) mind any of those vain and trifling Doubts, which the great and learned Men of the World have so industriously raised and fomented ; or at least he ought, neither to regard, nor be disturbed at them.

181.
This Faith convinces the Heart.

§. 181. And tho' sometimes, or, if you please, most commonly, we are beholden to the Ministry of either Men or Angels, for the first Discovery of External Propositions concerning Things spiritual ; yet Nothing but that divine FAITH alone, so often mentioned, can open and convince the Heart of Man, and make him assent

assent to them: So that the Ministry of Men or Angels, is only the external exciting Cause, moving and soliciting us to listen to the inward Testimony and Evidence of FAITH.

The Ministry of the Creature is only the exciting Cause.

§. 182. For our Salvation consists solely in the Enjoyment of this divine Light, (§. 93.) And the same Divine Light, is likewise the immediate Agent, the alone Worker and Finisher of our Salvation, (144-149.) What then can we attribute to any Creature interposing in this Work, but the mere outward Act of Exciting and Warning Man to resign himself to this inward divine Operator; to that Light of GOD, which is FAITH?

112. Which is proved.

§. 183. Nor can the Heresies, Controversies, and Errors, which have almost in every Age been broached in Divinity, be reasonably alledged to weaken the Certainty of Faith.

183. Controversies and Errors objected against Faith.

For such Things cannot by any Means be attributed to Faith, but arise from several other Causes: As First, Because Men forsaking the divine Simplicity of Faith, Did (1) no longer accept of those Things, which GOD proposed to them by others,

Ans. They are not owing to Faith; but proceed, First,

From Reason.

Which has
intermeddled
in the Affair.

Negatively.

Positively.

others, as *Means* to awaken them out of that Sleep and Insensibility which they labour'd under; and to excite them to give an attentive Ear to such Things as GOD Himself should speak in and to them; and so induce them to renounce all Affection to the Creatures, and wholly to yield themselves up to Him, to be illuminated and restored to their primitive Happiness and Perfection again: I say, such Evils have happen'd, because Men did not only not correspond with this most gracious and merciful Design and Will of GOD, as in Duty they ought to have done; But also because (1) they cry'd up those *Means* as the very Substance of Religion. (2) Because that by the Help of Reason, as an Architect, they framed certain Systems of Notions in Divinity, which they imposed upon and obliged others to believe. All which, (3) they, in a most sacrilegious Manner, set up and authorized under the sacred Name of FAITH, by which alone we are saved. And then, (4) They industriously communicated their said Tenets to others, as Divine and Essential Truths, and endeavoured every One to

to draw the Rest, either by Persuasion or Force, to his own Opinion.

This exorbitant Desire of Forming Sects (or Churches) and Propagating our own Opinions, is the most prolifick Mother, the most pernicious Source of all Heresies, &c. and must be utterly extinguished and destroyed, if ever we expect to see universal Peace, and brotherly Love and Charity flourish again in the World.

The Spring
and Fomen-
ter of all He-
resies.

To this, add (2) That Men being impatient under the Nakedness of their own Judgment, and the Scantiness of their Knowledge, which upon the first Dawnings of Faith are confined to the first and most necessary Rudiments only; they thereupon rejected, and even despised such Things, and would not wait to have their Minds thoroughly purified from every Cloud of Corruption; and thereby prepared and fitted to receive (without any Mixture of their own Darkness) the full Manifestation of Divine Light; but being overcome with a too eager Desire of Knowledge, and out of a haughty Presumption upon their own strength (tho' by Reason of the Blindness of their Minds they were not aware thereof) they too hastily, and with too

too great Assurance presumed to treat of Things Divine; whereupon every One formed to himself such Notions and Opinions as were most agreeable to his own Temper and Inclinations: And to such Idols have Men with all possible Fury offered up the Incense of their Devotions: To such, even at this Day, do many, yea, very many, most unworthily offer up their Oblations!

Now who can doubt, but that all these Things are wholly and solely the Work and Product of Reason? So true are the Words of Solomon, That *GOD made Man upright; but they have sought out many Inventions*, Eccles. ch. vii. 30.

184.
The other Cause of Error, is, an evil Will.

§. 184. Another unhappy Cause of our Errors and Differences, is, That Men will not act according to the Knowledge that they have of the Truth.

185
None that really desires to follow the Truth, can continue in any dangerous Error.

§. 185. For it is most certain, That whosoever sincerely delights in Regulating his Life according to the Truth, cannot be led away into, nor left in any dangerous Error.

Which is proved,

For GOD chiefly regards the Sanctity of the Soul.

But

of the Definition of Faith.

91

But there can be no Sanctity, but through the Truth. Whence CHRIST in the Days of his Exinanition, and a little before He was to return to his Heavenly Country again, *John*, ch. xvii. 17. prayed the Father, That He From *John* xvii. 17. would sanctify his Disciples through his Truth.

Now the Truth is Nothing but the Eternal Word of GOD itself, *John*, ch. xvii. 17. and the Light of Faith.

Who then can doubt, but that this Truth will sufficiently manifest itself to every sincere Lover of true Holiness, so far as is necessary to the Obtaining an End, which GOD Himself so ardently desires we should, and which is so well-pleasing to Him.

§. 186. And hence CHRIST most justly referr'd the *Jews*, when they enquired of old about the Truth of his Doctrine, to the Examination of their own Hearts; saying, *If any Man will do the Will of Him that sent me, he shall know of my Doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself,* *John*, ch. vii. 17. 186. And from *John* vii. 17.

§. 187. And after our Saviour, St. Paul, in like manner, deduces the Source of all Errors from the Per- 187. And from *Thess.* ii. 10, &c. verseness

verseness of Men ; because they receive not the Love of the Truth, but have Pleasure in Unrighteousness, 2 Thess. ch. ii. 10. seqq.

188.
And also
from John,
iii. 19.

§. 188. And verily, this will be the Condemnation of the World, not that Light is not come into the World, but, *that Light is come into the World, and Men have not received it ; but loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil,* John, iii. 19.

189.
Upon the
Removal of
this twofold
Cause of Er-
rors and
Controver-
sies, the
Light of
Faith most
certainly dis-
covers all
Things.

§. 189. Shut up then, these Two Poysonous Springs of all Errors and Disputes, and carefully guard against REASON and an EVIL WILL ; and you will quickly see the most pure, infallible and wholesome Light of FAITH, more and more arising in you, until it wholly dispel all the Clouds of your Corruption, and at last bring you into the bright and glorious Day of divine Knowledge.

190.
The Illumi-
nation of a
pure Soul is
the ultimate
end of Faith.
And Faith in
the other
Sense of the
Word, is the
Means we
must use.

§. 190. This indeed, is, the glorious Effect of divine Faith, and the ultimate End to which all its Operations are directed : But the *Means* through which all these Things are accomplished, is, FAITH in the other Sense, *viz.* as it comprehends the Duty of Man towards GOD,

(§. 157,

(§. 157, 158.) The one is the inseparable Companion of the other; they nourish and strengthen one another; they go Hand in Hand together, and finally perfect and compleat that admirable Work of GOD, the Procreation of the New Man in us, (§. 144—149.) So that we may well stand amazed to see all the Mysteries of our Salvation, so compendiously and adequately comprehended under that One Word FAITH!

§. 191. Having thus explained the Nature and Qualities of divine *Faith*, as it is the *Light* and *Word* of GOD in us; the Reader might expect, that in the next Place, we should give a more particular Account of FAITH, in the other Sense, as it regards our selves, and the Duty that we owe to GOD. But having treated of that at large in a * Discourse by itself, I shall wave the further Consideration thereof at present, and proceed to other Things, that tend more directly to our present Purpose.

191.
The further Consideration whereof is referred to another Discourse.

* This, with some others Written by the same Author, will also be shortly Published in *English*.

A Short VIEW, and more Familiar DEDUCTION of the same TRUTHS.

192.
The Subject
Matter of
Knowing
GOD by
Faith alone
resumed,
and deduced
from other
Principles.

§. 192. Before I pass on to other Things, I conceive it may be of Use to resume from the Beginning, and to explain in a more familiar Way, this whole Affair, Concerning the true Knowledge of GOD and divine Things, by Faith alone; In Hopes of giving some Hints that may conduce to set a Matter of so great Importance, and which has hitherto appeared to many so very abstruse, in a clearer Light.

193.
Things visible, proceed from those that are invisible.

§. 193. Supposing then, which is most certainly true, That the exterior and visible Things were produced by the Interior and Invisible;

194.
Things invisible are more real than the visible.

§. 194. It evidently follows, That Things interior and invisible are more real and substantial, than those that are visible; seeing whatsoever these have, they received it from them.

195.
Things visible are types of those that are invisible.

§. 195. And by the same Consequence, we also infer, That Things visible are Types of those that are invisible. For it cannot be, but that the Cause must necessarily stamp its

own

own Character and Resemblance upon the Effect or Thing caused.

§. 196. And hence finally we may infer, That Things visible do introduce and lead us into the Knowledge of those that are invisible; and that whatever we observe in them, the same likewise, in a much more real Manner, may we attribute to those, which are the Cause and Author of their Beings.

196.
From things visible, those that are invisible are known.

§. 197. As therefore it is evident, That there is a twofold Knowledge of Things corporeal and visible, viz. One *Real*, whereby we perceive the Thing itself, and the real Action and Impression thereof upon our Senses, and are thereby taught by Experience, what its Qualities are; and the other *Ideal*, whereby we set the Image of a Thing absent before our Mind, and by Meditating thereon, consider it several Ways.

197.
Knowledge twofold,

Real,

and Ideal.

§. 198. So in like manner, must we conclude of Things spiritual and invisible, That we are capable of knowing them two several Ways, viz. *Really*, When the Objects themselves are present, and touch and affect, and make a real Impression upon our Faculties; and are truly united to them;

198.
It is the same as to Invisibles.

them; and *Ideally*, when we form in our Imagination the Conception of a Thing absent (that is, of a Thing that does not actually manifest itself by some real Operation upon our Faculties) and examine and consider the same several Ways, (§. 196.)

199.
From
whence *Spi-*
ritual Per-
ception is al-
so proved.

§. 199. And thus from a new Principle we have established, what we formerly advanced concerning the real Perception of Things Spiritual, and the various Spiritual Senses adapted thereto, (§. 15.)

200,
Spiritual
Senses prov-
ed likewise
from Scrip-
ture.

§. 200. Thus likewise (which is the third Argument for Spiritual Senses) the Royal Prophet sings, *O TASTE and SEE that the LORD is Good*, Psal. xxxiv. 8. And, *I will HEAR what God the Lord will speak in me*, Psal. lxxxv. 8. Yea, CHRIST himself testify'd, that which He had *heard* and *seen* (in Heaven) *John*, ch. iii. 32. Nor did He any thing of himself; but what He had *seen* the FATHER doing, *John*, ch. v. 19. And as He had *heard*, so He judg'd, *John*, ch. v. 30. And He spoke those Things to the World, which He had *heard* of the FATHER, *John* ch. viii. 26. And thus also the Spouse singeth, *Let us run into the SAVOUR of thy Oynments*, Cant.

Cant. ch. i. 3. And, *My Bowels were moved at his TOUCH*, Cant. ch. v. 4. And thus many other holy Men, and such as have made the greatest progress in the Spiritual Life, frequently speak of a divine Contact. Now to refuse to believe such a Cloud of Witness, would be as great Madness, as to question the Testimony of Men of the greatest Integrity, in Things which they relate and affirm, upon their own certain Knowledge and Experience.

§. 201. And as there are diverse Senses; so likewise in Things Spiritual as well as Corporeal, one and the same Thing may be known one Way by the Sense of Seeing, another Way by Tasting, and a third Way by Hearing, &c.

201.
The real Knowledge of the same Thing various.

§. 202. And these several Ways of knowing or perceiving Things, are each in its Order, real, lively, and most true, provided the Faculty that perceives, be well disposed.

202.
Whereof every one is in itself certain.

§. 203. And hence it comes, that we never see any Body Disputing about such Things as are perceived by the Senses. For all agree, That Black is Black, and White White; and that the Sun shines in a clear

203.
Hence, there is never any Disputes about them.

F

Day:

Day : Because such Things equally affect all Mens Senses. Nor is there in Spirituals less harmony and agreement among those that enjoy the same Degree of Light and Experience.

204.
The more
Senses we
perceive a
Thing by,
the better we
know it.

§. 204. But tho' the Notion which any one Sense (being in good Order and well disposed) gives us of a Thing be true; yet no doubt, but that the more Senses we perceive any Thing by, the better we shall know it.

205.
He that does
not perceive
a Thing by
this or that
Sense, ought
not to be said
not to know
it at all.

§. 205. But it would be very absurd for any One to conclude, That because he cannot perceive such a Thing by this or that Sense, therefore he cannot have any real Knowledge thereof at all.

206.
The Objects
of one Sense
cannot be
known by
another
Sense.

§. 206. And it would be just as absurd, to endeavour to acquire by Hearing or Smelling, that Knowledge which comes by Seeing; or to desire to hear Light, or see Sound.

207.
The Difference
between Real
and Ideal
Knowledge,

§. 207. And if we consider the two Sorts of Knowledge: *viz. Real and Ideal*, and compare them both together; we shall find this mighty Difference between them; That the one actually enjoys the Object *present*,

sent, and the other only sports with the Image of a Thing *absent*.

§. 208. Moreover, It is highly necessary to Observe, That in all Ideal Knowledge, that Image which is represented to the Mind, can no farther truly represent the Thing itself, than as the real Perception thereof preceded, and gave birth thereto: And consequently, that we can frame nothing but very idle and ridiculous Notions of such Things as we never perceived by any of our Senses.

208.
The Ideal
can be true
no further,
but as the
Real prece-
ded it.

§. 209. So true is that old Maxim, *Nihil (veri) est in Intellectu; quod non primus fuerit in Sensu; i. e.* That we can have no true Notion or Idea of any Thing, but what we first perceived by some Sense or other: Which our Modern Philosophers, understanding it with regard to the Corporeal and Organical Senses only, have so violently opposed: But after all their elaborate Endeavours, they have only fought against and destroyed such Castles, as never had any other Existence, but only in their own confused Imagination.

209.
The ancient
Maxim, That
all our
Knowledge
comes by
Sense; vin-
dicated.

§. 210. What Notion, I pray, can a blind Man form of Colours, or of the Light, that he never saw? Sure-

210.
And proved
from the A-
nalogy be-
tween

Things visible and invisible.

ly none at all, or such at least, as must come infinitely short of the Truth. The Case is exactly the same with regard to Spirituals, (§. 196, 198.) For the more any One labours and suffers himself to be guided by his Reason in these Things, he will still invent more absurd Fancies; he will of Consequence, still run into more dangerous Errors.

211.
Real Knowledge cannot be confounded with that which is ideal.

§. 211. Finally, As the Ways of knowing by the real and lively Participation of the Object itself, and by the Image and Representation thereof, when absent, are very different (even as much as the real and true Sun differs from his Picture;) so would it be the greatest and most unpardonable Folly to confound one with the other; or to persuade our selves, that we enjoy the Things themselves, when we perceive Nothing but only their barren and dead Images.

212.
Not even in Spirituals.

§. 212. And as in Corporeal Things, it is impossible that any One of a sound Body and sound Mind, and that has once had the lively Experience of any Thing, can be so imposed upon; so likewise, whosoever has at any Time had a true and lively

lively Sense of Things Spiritual, cannot afterwards fall into any such Error.

§. 213. Hence we want no other Argument to prove, That any One never had any true and lively Sense of the divine Light; but only this, That he is yet ignorant how to distinguish the Light of Reason, from the Light of GOD.

213.
He that cannot distinguish the Light of Reason from the Light of GOD, has not yet perceived this last in its Purity.

§. 214. *Lastly*, (and which is most to our Purpose) In order to the real and lively Perception of any Object, its necessary, that we convert and turn; that we resign and deliver up our corresponding Faculties, to be acted upon, and influenced thereby: So that we have Nothing further to do, but to be merely passive, and to suffer it to act freely upon us after its own Way. That this is the Method, as to Things Corporeal, is evident; and that the Case is likewise the same in Spirituals, the Analogy between both, is a sufficient Argument, (§. 196.) Nor can any good Reason be given to doubt thereof.

214.
What we must do to perceive Things really, viz.

We must resign our Faculties to be acted upon by their respective Objects.

§. 215. And tho' this Phrase of Resigning and Delivering up our Faculties to their respective Objects, be not usual with regard to Crea-

215.
This Phrase of resigning usual, as to Spirituals.

ted (and especially Corporeal) Beings; yet nevertheless, we do it in effect: But with regard to Spiritual and Divine Things, such an Expression is very often, and very properly used.

216.
To believe in
GOD,
What?

§ 216. So that to resign and deliver up our Faculties, or in other Words, to *believe* in GOD, is to turn all our spiritual Faculties towards Him; that He may act in and upon them in his own Way, when, and how it shall please Him: And all that we have to do, is faithfully to receive his Impressions, and patiently to suffer ourselves to be acted upon and illuminated by Him.

217.
FAITH on
our Part.

§. 217. And this *steadfast* and *fiducial* Resignation and Surrendry of ourselves to GOD with a sincere and willing Mind, is called FAITH, in so far as it signifies that Act or Habit, on our Part.

218.
On GOD's
Part.

§. 218. And that gracious essential Operation of the divine Light in the Soul, which ensues thereupon, or rather, that Eternal Word of GOD itself, is likewise called FAITH, and the *Light* or *Word of Faith*: Partly, because it follows and ensues upon that Act or Habit on our Part, which

is

is called Faith; and partly, because it is the Earnest and Pledge which GOD has given us for our future Renovation; and the Substance of Things which according to his Promise We hope for; as we have proved more at large, (§. 153—155.)

§. 219. For GOD Himself is Light; and in his own Light alone, He most perfectly enjoys Himself; nor can any Operation ever proceed from Him, but what is luminous.

219.

GOD is Light, and all his Operations luminous.

§. 220. Whatever true and real Knowledge therefore we have of God and Things Divine, it solely arises from, and is produced in us by this divine Light, which is GOD Himself, really and immediately affecting and irradiating that spiritual Part of us, which is by Nature made and solely adapted to enjoy Him: And this Light is what we call the LIGHT of FAITH. In this Light alone we see Light; by the Help of this we taste the Goodness of the LORD; we feel a divine Contact; we smell a sweet Savour: This it is that draws us to CHRIST; the Holy Spirit by this reproves us of our Sins; by this He convinces our Consciences; softens our stony Hearts; teaches us the

220.

From this Light of Faith arises all our real Knowledge of GOD, and Things divine.

Law of the LORD, and does innumerable other Charitable Offices ; all which we may, by a real Participation of GOD, eternally make Tryal of. These are such glorious Effects and Operations, as can be ascribed to no other Cause, but to that divine LIGHT of FAITH alone.

221.
It ought not
to appear
strange to see
so many different effects
ascribed to
one and the
same most
simple Light.

§. 221. Nor can any One with any Colour of Reason be surprised to see so many various and real Effects and Operations (which hitherto have been commonly and most erroneously looked upon but as so many speculative Notions, with regard to Spirituals) ascribed to one and the same most simple Light.

222.
We have an
Instance of
the like Nature in the
visible Sun.

§. 222. For even the Light of our visible Sun, which gives Life and Motion, and every good Thing to the whole World, is an evident Symbol thereof, and clearly shews how such a Thing may be. Take away the Sun, and immediately all Things would become frozen and dead ; the whole World would be Nothing else but a very Chaos of Miseries. Whatever different Qualities therefore we perceive in sublunary Things, they arise solely from the Action and Incorporation of the same Solar Light, acting

acting in and upon them, according to their different and various Dispositions.

§. 223. But that which usually creates the greatest Difficulty in the present Case, is this; That tho' we be conscious to ourselves, that we are not wholly void of all Faith; yet we are not able to distinguish what we know of GOD by *Faith*, from what we know of Him by Reason; and that all our Knowledge seems to be of one Sort only; seeing what some say, they have written by divine Light, the same appears to others, to be most agreeable to Reason.

223.
A Difficulty, in that we cannot discern what we know of GOD by Faith, and what by Reason.

§. 224. But this Difficulty arises from a fourfold Error, 1. That (as is already observed) we ascribe Nothing to the Light of Faith, but only the distinct Notions and Ideas of particular Truths, as for Instance, That GOD is Just, Wise, Omnipotent, &c. 2. That Building upon this sandy Foundation, we make our Proficiency in divine Knowledge, wholly to consist in having clear and distinct Ideas of all the Divine Attributes, and in making Deductions from them. 3. That seeing Corpo-

224.
Which arises from a fourfold Error.

real Objects do strongly and most distinctly strike our Senses ; so likewise we fancy, if there be any such Thing as real Perception with regard to Spirituals, that the same Thing ought to happen in that Case too, even at the first Moment of our Conversion towards them. 4. That in judging of the Difference between the Light of *Faith* and the Light of *Reason*, we do not regard the *Manner* of Perceiving, as we ought to do, but only the objective Truths themselves. Whence it comes to pass, that when we hear of any One assured by *divine Faith* of the Existence, Liberty, or Goodness of GOD, or of any other divine Truth, and then find the same Thing contained in the Rational Idea that we have thereof, we presently but very ridiculously as well as erroneously conclude, That our Knowledge of such a Thing, is the same with his.

225.
The First Error
is Refuted.

§. 225. The first Error we have already Refuted, §. 220. For we know GOD not only speculatively, but also many other Ways, (§. 200, 201, 220) Nor ought we to think ourselves a Jot the more illuminated, because we distinctly know many particular

cular Truths concerning God : Seeing he that feels a profound Impression of the Divine Incomprehensibility and Immenſity, ſo that all the ſpecial and diſtinct Notions of GOD vaniſh, and become as Lyes and as Nothing in Compariſon of Things themſelves, as they are in Him ; ſeeing ſuch a One, I ſay, undoubtedly enjoys a much clearer Light, and knows GOD infinitely better.

§. 226. In like manner, the ſecond Error, which has deceived and infatuated very many, falls now of itſelf ; and is yet ſtill more ridiculous, in that, after all the Skill that ſuch Perſons uſe in forming clear and diſtinct Ideas, as they call them ; tho' it be Nothing but the Work of Reaſon, and can produce Nothing but Images and Pictures far inferior to the lively Impreſſions of the Things themſelves, (§. 198.) yet do they vainly imagine, that they have thereby attained to the real and ſubſtantial Knowledge of Things, as they are in themſelves.

226.
The Second.

§. 227. The third Error, flows from our Ignorance of our own Degeneracy and Corruption. For whoſoever has a lively Senſe thereof, and obſerves

227.
The Third.

observes in himself the universal Depravation of all his Faculties, he will not think it strange, that he cannot perceive the most subtile Influences of Things Spiritual, so readily, and so sensibly as he does those of Bodies. If the superior Part of the Soul were as sound at present, as the inferior Part is, whereby it is united to the Body, it is most certain, that we should then feel the Impressions of GOD upon it in a much more lively, evident and powerful Manner, than we now do any Corporeal Impressions.

228.
We do not
know
ledge he
perations of
divine Light.

§. 228. But why should we be so foolish, as not to look upon those powerful Ejaculations of divine Light, which often pierce the hardest Hearts, as the Effect of a divine Irradiation?

229.
Some of the
usual Effects
of divine
Light enu-
merated.

§. 229. Have we not often observed, That the most profligate Wretch can by no means stifle the Cries of a wounded Conscience? In spite of all that he can do to the contrary, he is forced to hear the Accuser, the Evidence and the Judge within his own Breast. Are we not sometimes so struck with the Brightness of divine Justice, and with such a deep Sense

Sense of our own Perverseness, that not knowing whither to turn ourselves, we are obliged to confess, *Just art Thou, O Lord, and just and righteous are all thy Judgments!* And where is there One among a Thousand, that truly and sincerely Fears GOD, and that does not sometimes most sensibly feel the Sweetness of the *Divine Goodness*? How often in the midst of the greatest Anguish and Trouble of Mind, are we unexpectedly filled with Consolation in our most inward Parts, which in an Instant so dispells all Anxiety, that not the least Mark nor Trace thereof can ever afterwards be found? Whence comes it, that such as are sometimes faint Hearted, and almost wholly overwhelm'd with perplexing Doubts and Fears, often in a Moment afterwards, see all those Clouds *dispersed* and *driven* away, and thereupon instantly recover *Hope* and *Courage* again; wondering, whence such a strange Change should come; as well knowing, that they long, but in vain, sought to Reason for Help, and that the external State of Things is still the same, and sometimes worse? Whence have some such great *Confidence* in GOD, such invincible

vincible Strength, that when they see all Things desperate and forlorn; yet can they, even against all Hope, trust in GOD, and joyfully suffer the greatest Hardships for his sake? Have we never heard, at least, (if not experienced in ourselves) how the most *obdurate* and *stony* Hearts, of the most abandoned Sinners, have in an Instant, and sometimes upon the most trifling Occasions, been so *softened* and *changed*, that they have forthwith been inflam'd with a most ardent Love of the same divine Precepts, which formerly they hated and despised, and ever after made it their whole Study to keep and improve in them? Do we not sometimes feel in ourselves a most tender Affection, and most fervent Devotion towards GOD; a sincere Sorrow for our Sins, and a Heart dissolving in Tears for them? Are we not often affected with a deep Sense of our *Corruption*; and does it not inspire us with a thorough *Hatred* of ourselves; does it not dispose us sincerely to *deny* and *humble* ourselves before GOD? Have we not sometimes a most clear Knowledge of our own *Nothingness*, and on the other Hand, a
most

most lively Impression of the Divine *Totality* and Infinite Majesty? Do we not plainly perceive how infinitely such Impressions transcend the most refined and barren Speculations? What mighty Force and Weight they carry with them; so that if we might possess Millions of Worlds; yet should we verily and indeed hold them all as Vanity and Nothing in Comparison of that most ravishing Sense of the Divine Excellency, that we are then under? Do we not, I say, often and evidently observe these and such like Things, partly in ourselves, and partly in others? And are they not so clear, so distinct, so lively and so powerful, that they infinitely transcend all corporeal Impressions? Insomuch, that let a Heart be never so much intangled and drawn away with the most exquisite Sensual Delights and Pleasures; yet do they instantly rescue it from that Slavery, and carry it with them into another, wholly different and diametrically opposite Path?

§. 230. What sort of Science then is this, which, in a Manner so far beyond what the greatest Philosophers, with all their Reason can think

230.
This is the
most solid
Knowledge.

Not communicated to the Wise; but to the Simple.

And consequently, not to be attributed to the Activity of Reason.

think of; yea, and very often against their Will, and in spite of all their Dictates; which beyond all the Powers of Nature, and in spite of Hell itself, works such wonderful Things? What is it, I say, but that solid, living, and most excellent Knowledge of GOD, and of Things Spiritual, which I have so often mention'd, and so fully explain'd? And yet notwithstanding, to our Shame be it said! Tho' Universal Experience demonstrates that this divine Knowledge is not given to the Learned, and to the great Improvers of Reason in their Generation; but to the Simple and to Infants of an upright Heart, and unimproved Reason, who make it their sole Business to wait upon their LORD in continual Prayer, and to approve themselves faithful and obedient to Him in all Things; yet scarce One in a Thousand considers such admirable Wisdom as derived from a divine and heavenly Principle; but only as the Effect of the Activity of Human Reason: Scarce can we meet with One, but what thinks, that we can thereby attain to a most certain and clear Knowledge of the most important
divine

divine Truths; when yet, if we rightly consider the Matter, we find that we cannot by the Help and Strength thereof, how much soever we endeavour it, form any Notion of them, nor explain what, or how they are: So far are such Things from being subject to the Jurisdiction of teeming Reason! So vain and impossible is the Attempt of forming clear and distinct Ideas of all Things! (as we have already hinted, §. 226.) But tho' we see and know such Things by Experience; yet scarce is there One to be found, that will acknowledge them to be performed by the *divine Light of Faith* in us! Yet still we complain, That that *divine Light* is not clear and distinct enough; that it does not operate with sufficient Power and Force upon our Faculties!

Which can form no distinct Ideas thereof.

'Tis impossible to form clear and distinct Ideas of every Thing.

§. 231. But besides the First and Second Error, which we have already Refuted, the Fourth likewise countenances this Folly; which we shall therefore in the next Place Examine.

231. The Fourth Error Refuted.

It is therefore very Ridiculous, and solely owing to our Natural Arrogance, to think, That because any One gives his Assent to an Ob-
jective

The same Truth may be known by several Persons, but yet after a very different Manner.

jective Truth, which we assent to likewise; that therefore we both know the same Thing in the same Manner.

232.
Which is illustrated by
Examples.

§. 232. Which is as absurd, as if the blind Man in the Gospel, that saw Men like Trees, *Mark ch. viii. 24.* should have affirm'd, that he saw them as clearly and as distinctly as the Rest did: Or, as if One that can only Reason very closely about the Transmutation of Metals, and knows the Ways of preparing, and the Manner of using the Philosophical Tincture, and that understands the Reason and Causes of that wonderful Operation; but that had never had any Experience nor gone through the Process of the Secret, should persuade himself, that he knows the whole Matter, as well or better, than he that, without any Ratiocination upon the Point, has not only learned and practised, and seen, and often done the Thing himself, and knows how to do it again whensoever he pleases; but even at that very time handles and sees it before him. In this Case, both think of the same Object; and they affirm and deny the same Things;

Things; but with' what a vast Difference, is easy to judge.

§. 233. The Case is the same, <sup>233. The Appli-
cation to
Spirituals.</sup> with regard to Spirituals. He that considers the Speculative Idea of GOD in his Mind, will without doubt confess, That GOD is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Good, Just, &c. and that therefore we ought to believe in and obey Him, and the like. And whosoever experiences the same Things in himself through the divine Light of Faith, cannot indeed express himself in other Words: But how much their Knowledge differs in Power and Efficacy, Common Sense, as well as the Conduct of their Lives, will easily determine.

§. 234. Whence comes it, that we <sup>234. The same
Thing prov-
ed from the
Effect.</sup> see Men of the greatest Parts, and such as spend their whole Lives in the Improvements of Reason and Philosophy, some falling into Atheism itself, and others abandon'd to Pride, Luxury and all other Vices, not only to the great and manifest detriment of their own Temporal Concerns, but even against all the Dictates of Reason, and against all the Rules of their own Moral Philosophy? Whence comes it, on the other Hand, that
Illiterate

Illiterate Men, and even Women, that know not what you mean by Reason, Ratiocination, Meditation, Ideas and Conceptions, do yet live a divine Life, have a lively Faith, unfeigned Charity, an immoveable Trust and Hope, and finally, are endued with all other Vertues, and with such excellent Wisdom, as infinitely surpasses all the Powers of Nature? These practise and live up to what they believe; upon their discovering, that GOD is transcendently Amiable and All-sufficient; they above all Things Love and Prefer, and most willingly and wholly Resign themselves to Him: In Him they hope, even against all Hope; Him, whom they think worthy of all Esteem, they only magnify; and all other Things whatsoever, they truly and actually despise.

235.
The Reason
of this mighty
difference.

Ideas communicate no
Substance;
but leave the
Soul hungry
and empty.

§. 235. Whence, I pray, arises this wide and mighty Difference? Is it not from hence, That a Speculative Notion, is only a mere Shadow, the Work of our own Active Reason, containing Nothing but cold and barren Ideas; which consequently, can neither add any new Substance or Reality to the Soul, nor fill or strengthen

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strengthen any intrinsic Faculty, as a true and real Object can and ought to do; but leaves all Things as cold, empty, and languid as they were before: Even, as the Consideration of the Sun's Picture, or the Picture of any sort of Victuals, would neither afford Light, nor Heat, nor Nourishment; nor consequently Life nor Strength.

§. 236. But whosoever has the same Notions convey'd into his Mind by divine *Faith*, he receives a real Influx of divine substantial Light, which affects and penetrates into the innermost Fund of his Heart, and which not only *Illuminates*, that is, *Instructs* and *Convinces* him of all Salutory Truths, but likewise *Warms* him with divine Love; and consequently, cherishes, nourishes, and really imparts *Motion*, *Strength*, and divine *Life*: All these Things it does by intimately Uniting itself to the Soul, and Growing, as I may say, into one Substance with it: Not unlike the Rays of our visible Sun, which not only illuminate, but also by their Heat cherish, and incorporate

236.
But divine Faith not only illuminates, but nourishes:

It communicates Strength and Life.

rate themselves into, and thereby give Life and Motion to all Things.

237.
We ought
to judge of
the Light of
Faith from
the Sentiments
of the
Heart, and
not from our
Notions
themselves,
as such.

§. 237. In order therefore to discern what we know of GOD by *Faith*, and what by Reason, we ought not barely to consider the Notions of our Minds, but strictly to examine the real Sentiments of our Hearts.

If Truth be imprinted upon the Heart, if it produce divine Love; if indeed it extol the Majesty of GOD in us, and destroy and annihilate self Love and self Esteem; if it not only teach us Obedience and filial Confidence, but also impart and communicate them; and consequently, make what we thus feel, to live in us; without all doubt, what we so perceive by and in the Heart, is of GOD.

For it is impossible, but that that which really leads to GOD, or at least draws and inclines the Heart to Him (for Man often resists and despises the Light of GOD) must be of GOD. No Man can come to CHRIST, except the FATHER draw him, *John* ch. vi. 44, 65. Nor can any One come unto the FATHER, but by CHRIST, *John* ch. xiv. 6.

§. 238.

§. 238, This is so true; and this divine Irradiation in and upon the Heart of Man, is so independent of all the Conceptions and Ideas of the Mind, that sometimes a false Opinion may rather promote than hinder this divine Light of Faith; and on the other hand, a true one may do more Harm than Good.

^{238.}
A false Opinion often helps Faith,

And a true one is an obstacle to it.

§. 239. Thus, for instance, There are some who believing the universal Redemption of Mankind (which now-a-days is become a new Controversy) find that such a Consideration inspires and kindles in them new and real Flames of Love; they find therein such an Abyss of the Love, Justice, Wisdom, Power, and Glory of GOD, with regard to his Creatures; and are so ravished with the glorious Harmony of these and all his other divine Attributes, which they think, all conspire together to support that Opinion, that they can never cease to extol and magnify such a Lover, and such a Blessing; nor forbear to joyn with all the Saints in offering up to Him again an Eternal Tribute of Love and Praise: Hence the Love of every Vertue truly increases in them, and a new and holy Fervour

^{239.}
Proved by Examples.

From the Controversy about the Universal Redemption.

Fervour inspires all their Thoughts: And they look upon it as the most extravagant Piece of Folly, not willingly to take the shortest Way, and thankfully to embrace the Divine Assistance, which is offered them, in order to attain an End, which they must at last, tho' late, and thro' innumerable Sorts of most exquisite Torments, come to: They look upon it as down right Madness for any Man to choose rather to incur and suffer under the heavy Wrath and Displeasure of an Incensed GOD, than to be drawn and united to Him by the sweetest and most Seraphick Love. Now all these are the divine Effects of *Faith*, §. 237.

But in others again; the same Opinion is apt to produce quite contrary Effects. They grow faint, languid and frozen; they turn all there regards to the Body only, and bid a long and shameful Farewel to all Vertue: For, say they, if all Mankind shall be restored, then we as well as all the Rest shall at last come to be made Happy. A dreadful Comfort indeed!

240.
And from
that about
Eternal
Damnation.

§. 240. So likewise among such as favour and espouse the Opinion of
Eternal

Eternal Damnation, there are some that are so frightened with the Horror thereof, that they are thereby driven to a serious Repentance, and consequently, upon their sincere Conversion to GOD, are Saved: Which is again the Work of Faith, §. 237.

But there are others that convert what was a Medicine to such sincere well-disposed Souls, into Poyson for themselves, inasmuch, as they most passionately and inordinately Love this World; and therefore either place all their Hopes in one or other of those most pernicious Inventions, viz. Eternal Predistination, or Imputative Righteousness alone; or murmur against GOD, as One that, as they falsely imagine, either sells Heaven at too dear a Rate, or that inflicts such lasting Punishments as bear no proportion to transitory Pleasures.

§. 241. Which of these two several and opposite Opinions, is the true one, is not material to the Purpose in Hand, to enquire. What we are to observe, is, That what in these two Instances, is Divine, and what is not, does not depend upon the Truth or Falsity of the Opinions them-

241.
what is divine in these Instances, depends not upon the Truth or Falsity of those Opinions, as such.

themselves, considered as *such*; otherwise, all of one side would enjoy the divine Light, and the other side would have none at all; neither of which is true in Fact: for amongst both Parties, we find Instances of some that enjoy the divine Light, and of others that are wholly destitute thereof, (§. 239, 240.)

242.
The Devil
has true Ide-
as of the
Christian
Religion,
but no Light.

§. 242. Yea, we have no Reason to doubt, but that the Devil has a clear and distinct Ideal Knowledge of all the Articles of the Christian Religion: But may we thence infer, that he is endued with the least Spark of divine Light?

243.
Divine Illu-
mination not
to be measu-
red by *Theo-*
retical No-
tions in the
Mind; but
from the
Power and
Efficacy of
Practical
Impressions
upon the
Heart.

§. 243. So that it is as clear as Day, that we are not to measure nor judge of the illumination of divine Faith, by the number and verity of *Theoretical* Notions, barely considered as *such*; but only by the Sanctity, Power and Efficacy of *Practical* and Central Impressions made in and upon the Fund of the Heart.

244.
The Cause of
this enquired
into.

§. 244. Now the Cause hereof may be illustrated and pointed at, but cannot be fully demonstrated in this Place. I will therefore plainly relate the Matter as it is.

§. 245.

§. 245. A Spirit is Power; and therein consists its Essence.

245.
The Essence
of a Spirit.

§. 245. 'Tis the Property of Spirits to penetrate one another, and to be in one another.

245.
They pene-
trate one an-
other.

§. 246. But yet so, as that every One either does, or may retain its own Nature, Actions and Passions; especially, if One be more subtile than the other.

247.
Without
confusion,
and without
communica-
ting their
Natures and
Affections.

§. 248. Whence it follows, That something Good or Evil, may be in one that's not in the other; and consequently, all communication of Merit or Demerit between them, may cease.

248.
And without
communica-
ting any Me-
rit or De-
merit.

§. 249. And on the contrary, upon the mutual consent and concurrence of their Wills, such a Communication, may intervene and be established between them.

249.
Which yet
may be done
by the Union
of their Wills.

§. 250. Such is the Nature of Spirits, that they are more lively, more penetrating, and more powerful one than another, in proportion as one is subtiler than another.

250.
The Power
of Spirits
proportion-
ate to their
Subtility.

§. 251. And in proportion to the rarity or density (give me leave so to express myself, seeing there are indeed Spirits, some subtiler, some grosser than others) whereof Spirits

251.
Every One
lives in an
Element sui-
table to its
Nature.

consist, they inhabit Elements or Places suitable and agreeable to their respective Constitutions.

252.
Which is
called the
Center, Prin-
ciple, World.

§. 252. Which Element or Sphere of Habitation, as we call it the *Center, Principle and World*; so its evident, from what has been said, (1) That the *Centers* of Spirits must also be Spiritual. (2) That there are divers Centers differing one from another in Quality and Degree, as do also the respective Spirits that inhabit them, §. 251.

253.
The superi-
or Spirits &
their Centers,
penetrate &
act upon
those that
are below
them; but
not *vice*
versa.

§. 253. According to the Course and Order of Nature, the more subtle and superior Spirits penetrate and act upon the grosser and inferior ones, even against their Will, (if in other respects they be equal) but not *vice versa*. And the same we must say of different Centers.

254.
Illustrated
by an Ex-
ample.

§. 254. An Example of the like Nature in the material and visible World, may possibly set this Matter in a clearer Light: Thus Air is in Water, Æther in Air; and Light in Æther: Where it is observable, That the superior Element always penetrates the inferior; and yet every one retains its own Nature, without any manner of Confusion.

§. 255.

§. 255. Now its evident, That in Man there are two Things to be considered, viz. The Outward and the Inward Man, Rom. ch. vii. 22, 23.

1 Pet. ch. iii. 4. Ephes. ch. iii. 16.

§. 256. 'Tis not our Business at present, to enquire strictly into the several Parts whereof each of these consist; 'tis sufficient to observe, That the Inward Man is a Spirit, and that thereto we must, without all peradventure, refer that divine Part of ourselves, which is adapted, and whereby we are capacitated to enjoy GOD; and which we have above, (§. 63.) distinguished by the Name of the *supreme Spirit*.

§. 457. Again, 'Tis certain, that this Inward Man is in the Outward, that it penetrates the same, and is, as I may say, incorporated therewith.

§. 258. But yet each retains its own Will, its own Senses, and likewise its own Intellect and Understanding.

§. 259. As to the *supreme Spirit*, we have already demonstrated, (§. 63.) That it is endued with such Faculties. And as to the Outward Man, the Case is so clear, that I can scarce conceive, how any One can doubt

G 3 thereof.

255.
The Outward and Inward Man.

256.
The Inward Man is a Spirit; and to it belongs the *supreme Spirit*.

257.
The Inward is in the Outward, and penetrates the same.

258.
Yet each retains its own Will, Sense and Understanding.

259
which is Proved.

thereof. For, whatever we Do, Will, Perceive, or Think, it proceeds almost wholly from the Outward Man. For where is there One among many Thousands, that has so much as heard (much less experienced within himself) of any such Thing as a supreme Spirit in us, endued with divine Faculties? So stupid and insensible are we become, that, alas! this inward supreme Spirit, is even almost dead in all Men!

260.

In every Man there are two real and distinct Wills.

§. 260. But however, least I should be thought to speak of a Matter of so great importance, without any Authority from the Scripture; I will endeavour to Prove out of that, That in one and the same Man, there are *two* real and distinct Wills, *viz.* the *supreme* Will of the Spirit or Inward Man; and the *inferior* Will of the Flesh or Outward Man.

261.

Proved from Scripture.

§. 261. This then appears:

I. From *Rom. ch. vii. 22, 23, 25.* *I delight,* says St. Paul, *in the Law of God, after the INWARD Man; but I see another Law in my MEMBERS, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members.*

Members. So then, with the MIND I myself serve the Law of GOD; but with the FLESH the Law of Sin.

We see here, in one and the same *Paul*, two several and distinct Propensions, Delights, Concupiscences, that is, two Acts of Will; one in the Mind, whereby it embraces the Law of GOD, and is willing to keep the same: the other in the Flesh, and in the Members, whereby it rejects that Law of GOD, and is carry'd away to Sin.

These Acts are repugnant one to the other, and one captivates the other: Therefore they are exercised at one and the same time; otherwise there could be no Quarrel between them, nor could one captivate the other.

But two contrary Acts cannot both at one and the same instant, proceed from one and the same Thing, *Jam.* ch. iii. 11, 12. One and the same Will, cannot at the same time, Will and not Will one and the same Thing.

Therefore, in *St. Paul* there were two real and distinct Wills, which at one and the same time produced in him those contrary Acts.

II. From *Rom. ch. vii. 15.* *For that which I do, I allow not: For what Good I would, that I do not: but the Evil I hate, that I do:* Which is again repeated, ver. 19.

Now its evident, That we can have no Notion of any Moral Action, without the Will that wills and performs it: For to act or do, is nothing but effectually to Will. Whence *St. Paul*, ver. 20. says, *Now if I do that I would not, 'tis no more I that do it.*

In like manner, it is impossible to have any Notion of Hatred without the Will: For what I hate, that I will not, and what I will, that I cannot be said to Hate by the same Will.

When *St. Paul*, therefore says, what I Will I do not; but what I hate that I do; it is in effect, as much as if he had said: What I will, that I will not; and what I will not, that I will. Which being manifestly contradictory one to the other, it is impossible, that they could at one and the same time proceed from one and the same Will.

III.

III. From *Rom. ch. viii. 13.* Where we are commanded, *Not to live after the Flesh; but thro' the Spirit to mortify the Deeds of the Flesh.*

To live after the Flesh, is to do (and consequently to will) what the Flesh desires (or wills) and what is grateful and agreeable thereto.

And to mortify the Deeds of the Flesh thro' the Spirit, what is it but to do the contrary of that which the Flesh desires; that is, in the SPIRIT effectually to will the contrary of that which the FLESH willeth.

Therefore these Volitions being directly contrary and repugnant one to the other, do again necessarily presuppose two really distinct Wills, from whence they proceed; unless we would ascribe the greatest Absurdities to St. Paul.

IV. From *Galat. ch. v. 24.* *And they that are Christ's, have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*

Now that Expression, to crucify, necessarily implies, that we must have a Will wherewith to do it: Therefore the Will that crucifies is

one; and that which is or ought to be crucified is *another*.

V. From Galat. v. 17. *The Flesh LUSTETH against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh: And these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the Things that ye would.*

Can any thing be more exprefs? Are not the Spirit and Flesh manifestly contra-distinguished here? Is it not asserted in exprefs Words, that the one is not the other? They both lust (that is, will or desire) and their Volitions are directly contrary and repugnant one to another.

VI. From Gal. ch. v. 16. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the LUSTS of the Flesh.*

Now the Phrase, *Ye shall not fulfill*, cannot be conceived without a Will, that can and may resist the Desires, that is, the Will of the Flesh. It is therefore the Will of the Spirit that resists, and the Will of the Flesh that's resisted; which consequently, are as opposite as Action and Passion.

VII. From 1 Pet. ch. ii. 11. *I beseech you, as Strangers and Pilgrims,*
A B-

ABSTAIN from fleshly **LUSTS**,
which war against the Soul.

There is therefore a Will that has fleshly Lusts; and there is also another superior and more powerful one that can resist the same, and restrain its Lusts. The Apostle's Words cannot admit of any other Sense or Interpretation.

VIII. From *Luke*, ch. xxii. 42. **CHRIST** kneeling down, prayed, saying, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me; nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done.*

Behold here, two distinct Wills in **CHRIST** Himself; one wherewith He prayed (for it would be ridiculous to think, that He could pray without a Will) that the Cup might be remov'd; and another willing the quite contrary, *viz.* That it might not be remov'd. With one, which Himself calls a Will, He willed and desired a Deliverance; and with the other, He willed and desired, that the said inferior Will, might not be comply'd with: This we must allow, as we would avoid and discountenance that blasphemous Suggestion, That He did not deal sincerely with his

his FATHER ; Or, that He did not truly desire, that his first Will might not be done :

262.
Every Man, having two Wills, must also have two Faculties of Perception.

§. 262. As therefore there are in us two Wills, really distinct one from the other ; so consequently, we must be endued with two distinct Perceptive Faculties ; that is, each Will must have its own respective Senses and Understanding fitted and adapted to it.

For there can be no Will without Perception. For to what purpose should the Will will any Thing, if it could perceive Nothing ?

263.
The same Thing proved from Scripture.

§. 263. And hence it is, that the *Natural* (or Outward) Man, is said not to PERCEIVE the Things of the Spirit of GOD ; for they are Foolishness unto him ; neither can he KNOW them : But the *Spiritual* (or Inward) Man, judges all Things, 1 Cor. ch. ii. 14, 15.

Hence also, it appears, That it was St. Paul's Inward Man, that was caught up into the Third Heavens, and there heard unspeakable Words, which it was not lawful for a Man to utter, 2 Cor. ch. xii. 4.

And the same Thing is evident, from the Examples of *Elisha*, *Isaias*,
Daniel,

Daniel, Zacharias and John, whose inward Senses were opened, so that they could see, hear, taste, feel and smell the Things of the other World.

§. 264. And hence we are furnished with a *fourth* Argument, which clearly Proves, That we are endued with spiritual Senses; and that they are wholly different, and really distinct from the outward Senses.

264.
The *fourth* Argument for spiritual Senses.

§. 265. And hence also, we ought to conclude, That the Faculties of the Inward Man, answer and correspond to the respective Faculties of the Outward Man, and penetrate them. For it would be absurd to say, That the Sight, v. g. of the Inward Man is lodged in the Hearing of the Outward.

265.
The Faculties of the Inward Man are in those of the Outward, and penetrate them.

§. 266. As therefore, the Inward Man and all its Faculties, are more subtile than, and superior to the Outward Man and its Faculties; so in the right of its own Nature, if the said Inward Man had remained uncorrupted, it would have governed and ruled over the Outward, according to its own Pleasure: And this with all its Faculties, would have been subject to that, as to its lawful Lord and Governor, (§. 250—253.)

266.
The Inward Man ought by Nature to rule over and govern the outward.

And

And that again would have been subject and obedient to GOD its Creator, who so framed it, that He might dwell therein Himself, and nourish, strengthen and transform, and finally crown it with Eternal and most transcendant Happiness *.

* Sect. 63.
93.

267.
But it is fallen under the Bondage of the Outward Man.

§. 267. But herein consists that most lamentable Fall of Man; from hence flows all our present Miseries and Unhappiness, in that the Case is now quite otherwise; that most excellent and most beautiful Order of all Things, having been long since wholly confounded and inverted. For the supreme Spirit, or Inward Man, when once it turn'd itself from its own adequate and beatific Object, the true and sovereign Good, being all of a sudden deprived of its proper Nourishment, and thereupon growing weak and languid, fell under the most wretched Servitude of the Outward Man; which was, and still is, the more insupportable, desperate and irretrievable; in as much as being continually prompted by its own innate Hunger, to seek for Objects, whereunto to unite itself, and wherewith to fill and satisfy all the boundless

less and infinite Capacities of all its Faculties ; and finding none such, (having lost the divine Light) in it self, it thereupon, and without more to do, embraces and adheres to such Objects as the Outward Man, or the Flesh loves, and feeds upon.

And by such a voluntary Adhæsi-
on, the supreme Spirit is so united to,
and made one with the Outward
Man ; and consequently, is so abso-
lutely subjected thereto, that it has
lost all Sense of itself, and has utterly
forgot that it was originally quite an-
other Thing from that, and of a much
more divine Nature : So far is it at
present from resisting the motions of
the Flesh, or from being either able
or willing to recover its own native
Liberty and Dominion.

§. 268. And from this Deplorable
Subjection, the supreme Spirit can
never disengage and recover itself,
but through the Grace of that Di-
vine FAITH already explained,
which is both able and willing to
supply it with *Light* and *Strength*,
whereby to know its true Good, and
its own miserable Condition ; to re-
sist and conquer the Tyrant ; and fi-
nally,

268.

From which
it cannot be
delivered
but by di-
vine Faith,
which sup-
plies it with
Light and
Strength.

finally, to regain its own primitive Liberty, Dignity and Dominion.

269.
Thus the
Truth, which
is the Light
of Faith, sets
us free from
the Bondage
of Sin.

§. 269. And in this Manner the Truth (that Substantial and Eternal Truth, that divine Light and Eternal Word) delivers us (*John*, ch. viii. 32.) from the Bondage of Sin, that so we may no more commit sin, *ib.* ver. 34. And finally, that sin may no longer reign in our mortal Body, that we should obey it in the Lusts thereof, *Rom.* ch. vii. 12. Nor yield our Members as Instruments of Unrighteousness unto Sin; but yield ourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the Dead, and our Members as Instruments of Righteousness unto God, *ib.* ver. 13. As Debtors not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh, *Rom.* ch. viii. 12. Because, if we live after the Flesh we shall die; but that through the Spirit we mortify the Deeds of the Body, and live; *ib.* ver. 13. And that consequently, we may obtain that most blessed Testimony of the Holy Spirit in our Spirit, That we are the Children of God, *ib.* ver. 16. And Heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Christ, v. 17. viz. When we are led by the Spirit of God, ver. 14. And are no longer under the Law, *Gal.* ch. v. 18. In as much as it is not against such as bring forth

forth the Fruits of the Spirit, ver. 22. But that being under Grace, we obey the same unto Righteousness; Rom. vi. 16. So that as we yeilded our Members to serve Uncleaness and Iniquity (the Outward Man) to commit Iniquity, even so now we may yild our Members Servants to Righteousness unto Holiness, (or Sanctification) ver. 19. For when once we come to be in this manner under the Power of Grace, Sin has no longer Dominion over us, ver. 14. And we justly thank God, That we were the Servants of Sin, v. 17. but that being now made free from Sin, we are become Servants to God, and have Fruit unto Sanctification, and the End everlasting Life, ver. 22. Which is the Privilege of Sons only, to whom it is given to abide in the House for ever, John, ch. viii. 35. viz. To them, whom the Onely begotten Son has made free, and who consequently are free indeed, ver. 36.

§. 270. And this is that true Liberty to which Christians are called, Gal. ch. v. 13. And not unto such as serves for an Occasion to the Flesh, and for the fulfilling the Lusts thereof, ver. 16. which is rather a most grievous Slavery. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoso-

270.
This is the true Christian Liberty, not to be subject to Sin.

whosoever committeth Sin, is the Servant of Sin, John, ch. viii. 34. And such as live in the Lusts of the Flesh, are truly the Servants of Corruption: For of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in Bondage, 2 Pet. ch. ii. 18, 19. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves Servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness? Rom. ch. vi. 16. Yea, He that committeth Sin, is of the Devil, 1 John, ch. iii. 8. And hath neither seen nor known Christ, ver. 6. That true Deliverer, John, ch. viii. 36. Who was therefore manifested to take away our Sins, (viz. really and truly, so that there might not be so much as any footsteps of 'em left in us) 1 John, ch. iii. 5. And, that He might destroy the Works of the Devil, ver. 8. So that in this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil. Whosoever is not Righteous, (or that doth not Righteousness, and is Righteous even as CHRIST is Righteous, ver. 7. Or, that doth not sanctify and purify himself, even as He is Pure, v. 3.) is not of God, v. 10. For, whosoever is born of God, doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot

cannot sin, because he is born of God, v. 9. As long then as any One has his Conversation in the Lusts of his Flesh, doing the Will of the Flesh and of the Thoughts (or of Reason), so long is he a Child of Wrath, Eph. ch. ii. 3. and of Disobedience, in whom the Prince of the Power of the Air worketh, ver. 2. whose Slave therefore he is, 2 Pet. ch. ii. 19.

§. 271. From which most wretched Condition, if we would in earnest be deliver'd, 'tis absolutely necessary, in order thereunto, That that Word of God, which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, (or that Light of Faith so often mention'd) pierce us, even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, Heb. ch. iv. 12. And thereby restore this last and noblest Part to its own proper Element, and adequate Object again, which is the GOD of Light Himself: That consequently, upon the recovery of its original Purity and Vigor, it may ever afterwards live a divine Life. This is the main Point of the Business; this is the End of our Redemption; this is the Essence of the whole CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

271.
How we
may obtain
the same.

This is the
Essence of
the Christian
Religion.

§. 272.

272.

But to this there is required both Time and Means, and the Co-operation of the Inward Man.

§. 272. But so great a Miracle of Grace, is not perform'd in an instant, nor without the co-operation of the Inward Man; and consequently, not without the use of Means, to succour and assist our Weakness.

273.

Hence the Inward Man has a Right to use the Outward as may most conduce to the Recovery of its primitive Liberty.

§. 273. And hence, the Inward Man has a right over the Outward, and over all Things whatsoever appertaining thereunto; to use them freely, and as it shall think fit, in order to enable it the more easily, certainly and fully, to surrender itself to GOD, most intimately present with, and most effectually working in us that great Work of Renovation. Yea, the Inward Man not only has a Right, but also is indispensably obliged to use the Outward Man, and to determine and influence all the Faculties thereof, in such manner as it shall find most conducive to the Recovery of that primitive Union with GOD; wherein alone consists our true and native Liberty.

274.

Upon this Use depends all the value of the Outward Man, and of all our Ideal Knowledge, whether true or false.

§. 274. And upon such a right use depends all the value of the Outward Man, and of all Things (even all our Ideal Knowledge, as well that which is objectively true, or that which is false) within the jurisdiction, or in any

any wise appertaining thereunto: All which otherwise, and in themselves, or in any other view or respect, are of no manner of value nor consideration: But on the contrary, if we consider them as they quench and oppose the Spirit, we must avoid them as the most deadly Poyson.

* Hence we may now understand, why the Illumination of Faith, which alone must restore us to our primitive Liberty again, is not to be estimated by the number and truth of Theoretical or Ideal Notions: Because that, altho' the divine Understanding be in the outward, and secretly penetrate the same (which is also endued with Reason); yet nevertheless, they are, and always continue, truly and really distinct one from the other.

§. 275. Now from this real Distinction, it follows, That Reason, or the Active Understanding of the Outward Man, may be excellently well furnish'd and adorn'd with all sorts of Ideas, when at the same time, the Divine Understanding of the Inward Man, may be wholly and utterly void of all Divine Light and Knowledge; which is the Case of the

* The Argument, Sect.

243. Resumed.

Why the Illumination of Faith ought not to be measured by the multitude and truth of our Theoretical Notions and Ideas.

275.

How Errors do not obstruct true Illumination.

the Wicked : And contrary wise, the divine Understanding and the whole Inward Man may be truly and plentifully irradiated with divine Light, when at the same time, Reason or the Outward Man, may possibly labour under Ignorance and Error; provided that the Inward Man do not adhere to the Errors of the Outward, nor adopt them as its own; but rather continue stedfast and intent upon GOD alone, in naked Faith, and as He is in Himself, infinitely exalted above every Creature and consequently, above every Notion or Conception that we can possibly form of Him (§. 247, &c.) This is in some measure exemplify'd in the Air, which tho' it be cloudy and thick itself, yet it does not affect the Æther (and much less the Light it self); so that tho' the Air itself be incapable of the Light of the Sun, yet it does not hinder, but that the said Light may penetrate and affect the Æther.

276. §. 276. Hence likewise it appears, That how much soever the Carnal or Outward Man rebel against the Spirit; yet, if the Inward Man resist, and utterly refuse to comply or consent

How Temptations and the Rebellious of the Inferior Will are not Sins.

sent to the Suggestions thereof, it is not only not thereby defiled with Sin; but rather gives a glorious Instance of Vertue, and does what is most acceptable in the Sight of GOD; by the Power and Efficacy of whose Grace such a Victory is obtained.

§. 277. To Sum up the whole: ^{277.} Nothing done or not done in the Outward Man, if we consider it in itself, and in its own Nature, it neither availeth nor hurteth the Inward Man; but only in so far as the Inward Man voluntarily uses the same to a good, or to an evil Purpose; that is, as it more or less contributes to unite the supreme Spirit to GOD; and as it more or less induces the same to love Him.

§. 278. For the supreme Spirit of Man derives its original from a very different Principle, and is of a much more exalted Nature, than the Outward Man, how Rational soever, can pretend to. ^{278.} The supreme Spirit proceeds from another Principle.

§. 279. For GOD Himself is its immediate Center, its Place and Habitation; its beatifick Object and Nourishment; from whom it receives Life, Strength and Substance. ^{279.} Viz. from GOD, in whom it lives, and upon whom it feeds.

§. 280.

280.

To whom
therefore it
ought to
turn itself,
and live in
Him.

§. 280. In Him alone therefore, as He is in Himself, it ought to dwell: to Him it ought constantly to turn its innermost Fund, and all its Faculties, in order to be filled and nourished with his divine substantial Light.

281.

And if an
erroneous O-
pinion con-
tribute
thereto it
doth no
harm.

§. 281. Which, in what Manner, or by what Occasion soever it be accomplished, or whether any true or false Opinion entertained by the Outward Man, contributed thereto, it matters not; nor does GOD in any wise regard such Circumstances.

282.

Before GOD,
all the
Knowledge
of the Out-
ward Man is
of no confi-
deration.

§. 282. Before whom all this outward Frame, with all its Rationality and Knowledge, how true soever it be objectively, is not, if considered in itself only, in the least esteemed or regarded.

283.

The great
Folly of
wrangling
about Opi-
nions,

§. 283. Can any Thing then be an Argument of greater Folly, than continually to dispute and quarrel about the truth or falshood of different Opinions, which yet of themselves, neither advance nor obstruct a real and salutary Illumination, which is the Work and Effect of Faith alone? Surely, the Enemy of our Salvation could never have invented a more plausible Method to distract the whole Christi-

Christian World; He could never sow a Tare more destructive, nor better able to choke the divine Seed of Faith (whose Property it is to bring forth the Fruits of good Works) than this impotent Lust, this inordinate Desire of multiplying and disputing about the Notions of abstracted Truths.

§. 284. I will not positively affirm, That the Light of Faith cannot, or that it does not sometimes illuminate the Intellectual Sight of Man, and thereby enable him to Understand even the most abstruse Truths and Mysteries; for the Spirit of GOD, which always accompanies that Light, *searcheth the deep Things of GOD*, 1 Cor. ch. ii. 10.

284.
The Light of Faith sometimes discovers the most abstruse Truths.

§. 285. But First, This is not the only Species of Illumination.

285.
But this is not the only kind of Illumination,

Nor is this extraordinary Knowledge of Secrets, or even of the general Mysteries of GOD, essential to all solid and salutary Illumination.

Nor essential.

For without all doubt, there are some truly Holy, and consequently, most Illuminated Souls, that never experienced any such Thing.

§. 286. Moreover, such Favours are seldom granted, but only to such

286.
Nor is it granted, but only to such

H

Souls

experienced Souls as easily know how to distinguish it from their own Reason. Souls as are very much experienced in that inward Correspondence with GOD, and which thro' long Use are so well acquainted with the divine Light, that they cannot but most easily distinguish it from any other.

§. 287. But to make another Person that never experienced any such Thing, comprehend by his Reason, how such illuminated Souls can do so; is as impossible as to make a Man that's born blind, comprehend that Sensation that we have of the Sun's Light, and how thereby we can discern every Thing else.

§. 288. But if it should please GOD to pour out the Light of such extraordinary Knowledge upon any One, that has not his inward Senses yet sufficiently exercised and prepared for it; it will either bring some unquestionable Mark of its own Divinity along with it; and then he will have no Occasion to ask of others, Wherein the divine Light differs from the Light of Reason; but being infallibly assured within himself as to that Matter, he will also understand the Language of others, to whom the like Thing may happen.

§. 289.

§. 289. Or else, it will not carry with it such Evidence; and then a Man ought to have regard to the other Qualities of divine Faith, (§. 237.) which if he find, let him not stick to that particular Opinion as such, nor stiffly maintain it as Divine: But in Remembrance of Human Frailty, let him suspect and mistrust his Reason, which has often deceived the most quick-sighted; let him commit the whole Matter to the Judgment of GOD; let him plunge himself into the Essential and Eternal Truth itself, as it is in the Divine Substantial Word, and not as it is in the Understanding of any Creature; rejecting every particular Notion, and sincerely owning and declaring, that he does not in the least adhere to any Thing, but to the said Universal Truth only; and to those unquestionable luminous Operations of divine Faith, (§. 228—230, 237.) which do not depend upon the particular Notions themselves, (§. 238.)

§. 290. He that observes these Rules, will neither deceive others, nor be deceived himself.

And he that always walks in this Path, will be sure never to fall into

289.
Or, if it does not; then he ought to examine it by the other unquestionable Qualities of Faith: What to be done further.

290.
By this means we neither can deceive, nor be deceived.

any dangerous Error with regard to himself; nor into any damnable Heresy in the Sight of GOD.

§. 291. I don't say, that we ought to reject every Thing that does not bring along with it most evident and unquestionable Marks of its own Divinity: But only that we ought not fully and securely to acquiesce in them, as if they were infallibly Divine; nor too eagerly to contend for them, as if they were Things of the last and greatest Importance to us; but that on the contrary, in an humble Diffidence of ourselves, we ought to leave such Things to GOD, and to every One's own Experience, *Whether, and how far, and in what Manner, they may conduce to their Proficiency in and towards GOD*; without which, whatever any One does or feels in himself, is vain and unprofitable.

§. 292. Moreover, it's evident, that provided we will have a due Regard to this Caution, we are not only permitted, but obliged to employ our Thoughts about Things Divine, either by Reading, Meditation or Prayer; so long, and in so far, as we find by Experience, that they serve as Means suited to our Disposition, and contri-

291.
All Things
not to be ab-
solutely re-
jected, but
are rather to
be retained,
in so far as
they help to
bring One to
GOD.

292.
So far it is
adviseable
to read and
meditate up-
on Things
Divine.

contributing to promote and advance the real and undoubted Effects of divine Light in us.

§. 293. For by this Touchstone alone, every One that has not yet felt that invincible Brightness of divine Light, irradiating, and operating in and upon his own divine Understanding, ought to judge what Opinions he ought to entertain; such namely, as upon his own Experience, he finds qualifies him most for the Reception of the said salutary Influences of Faith.

293.
What Notions every One ought to entertain.

§. 294. But in doing of this, we must be very cautious, and use great Moderation with respect to others: We must not draw any Consequence from ourselves to them; nor conclude, that every Thing is advantageous or hurtful, or that it will produce good or evil Fruits in them, because we find it does so and so in us. We must therefore leave every One to GOD and to himself, and sincerely love all good Men, without any regard to their Opinions.

294.
A Caution.

§. 295. To what has been said, I may add further, That for the most Part, the divine Light of Faith, does not teach deep Mysteries, nor the

295.
The Light of Faith, for the most part, teaches the plainest Truths, and

ach as pro-
more holiness
of Life,

Decisions of Controversies; but the most popular and plainest Truths only, and such as more immediately lead and dispose to a Holy Life: And this, as I have already observed, it does in such a lively Manner, as immediately affects the Heart; in such a Way, as is accommodated even to the meanest Capacity, and may be exerted upon every Occasion, and in the lowest Stations of Life: So that, in this respect, we can never sufficiently love and admire the Divine Goodness towards us.

296.
Upon all Occasions,

§. 296. Thus upon Occasion of Success and Prosperity in our Affairs, we are excited to return Thanks to GOD, and to lead such a Life as may be acceptable and well-pleasing in the Sight of so Great and so Gracious a Benefactor.

But when any Misfortune happens to us; we are inwardly admonished, that it is Nothing but the Effect of the Divine Justice; that we ought therefore to acquiesce therein; and to amend the Fault, whereof our Conscience accuses us: Or, that all Things under the Sun are Vanity, and ought therefore to be despised, in order to obtain Things Eternal and Immutable

in

in GOD Himself; with many other
such like Considerations.

§. 297. Blessed is he, that continu-
ally watches the Motions of his own
Heart, so as to perceive and execute
all those Commands that issue out
from the most inward Parts thereof.
Such a One will in a short Time at-
tain to the most certain, and most
clear Knowledge of divine and living
Faith; which will still grow bright-
er and brighter, as the Eternal Sun
of Righteousness approaches nearer
the Horizon of his Heart, and scat-
ters and disperses the Clouds of his
own Unrighteousness.

297.
He is blessed
that observes
and acts ac-
cording to
the inward
Dictates of
his own
Heart.

§. 298. And if any One will but
seriously consider these Things; he
will easily see, how grossly they are
mistaken, who think, That divine
Faith obliges us to descend to parti-
cular Hypotheses or Systems, (as they
are compris'd under certain Heads,
commonly called *Articles of Faith*),
and to chuse one or other, and
then to stick to that alone, as the true
One: When it rather suggests to us
the quite contrary; and plainly
teaches us, to crave all Things ne-
cessary to be known, of GOD alone;
to wait patiently for his gracious,

298.
Divine Faith
does not o-
blige nor
dispose Men
to espouse
particular
Systems or
Confessions
of Faith.

clear, and undoubted Illumination ; nor in any wise to presume upon our selves ; nor magisterially to dictate in any Thing ; nor in any wise or in any Case to judge our Brother ; but only to consider every Thing as it regards ourselves, and may be expedient, or not expedient for us.

299.
The third
Sense of the
Word
FAITH.

§. 299. Hence likewise, it clearly appears, what we ought to think of FAITH, in the third Sense of the Word, to which alone, the Author of the pretended *Demonstration* seems to have had an Eye ; which consists in this, That *upon the Credit of the Proposer, we assent to, and believe a Proposition* to be true.

300.
How it
flows from
the other
two.

§. 300. For, as FAITH in the first and second Sense, cannot but abound in Charity ; so likewise it easily inclines the Mind to believe all such Things as are good and agreeable to Love : For, as it always acts sincerely itself, so it easily hopes, that others do so too. Yea, if it certainly knew *through the inward Testimony of Faith*, that such a Thing came from, and was proposed by GOD ; it could not possibly doubt thereof, nor question his Authority.

§. 301.

§. 301. And in so far *Faith*, in this third Sense of the Word, is necessarily included in the two former: 301. In which it is included as an Effect.

But no otherwise, but by Way of Consequence only, as an Effect and secondary Property, and for the most Part of very little moment, if every Thing else be right; so far is it from constituting of itself the Nature of Divine FAITH.

§. 302. Nor need we in this Case to dread such evil Consequences, as this Author would persuade us. 302. There is nothing to be fear'd in this, For

he that strictly follows the Dictates of FAITH instructing him in the innermost Center of his Soul, and looks upon all outward Things as Means only to excite him to hearken to them, (as indeed they are Nothing else, §. 181, 182.) and from thence takes Occasion to watch, and to wait inwardly upon his G O D, and to do his Will sincerely according to the best of his Knowledge, he may be assured that all Things shall go well, and that Hell itself shall never prevail against him.

§. 303. So that even the greatest Simplicity, provided it be accompany'd with *sincere Piety*, (and true Simplicity cannot be separated from it) 303. Not even by the most Simple.

H 5 can

can never fall into any Damnable Error.

Yea, the more simple any One is, the more secure he is; nor does any Thing conduce so much to defeat and elude all the most artful Contrivances of our most crafty Adversary, as that Divine and Infant-like Simplicity.

§. 304. Such a Simplicity being attended with profound Humility, seeks Nothing sincerely but what is evidently Good, and wherein it may please its GOD. But a good Mind easily finds good Things every where, and stands in need neither of much Cunning, nor of the Activity of Human Reason for that Purpose: All Things present themselves of their own Accord to it. And thus the Enemy being extremely Impatient of and unable to conquer such Humility, is all at once shut out; Forasmuch, as he can do us no Mischief, unless we first yield up to him the Weapons of our own Active Pride, and Proud Activity.

§. 305. And indeed so it became the Divine Goodness towards us, viz. To secure us, whom out of his Infinite Love He was pleased to put in a Capacity

305:
'Tis agreeable to the divine Goodness to secure us a-

of the Definition of Faith.

155

Capacity of being wholly restored again, against the Power of all our Enemies; except in so far as, through some inexcusable Error of our own, we should subject ourselves to them again.

gainst the Power of the Enemy.

§. 306. Learn then, O MEN, *Sincerely to cultivate true Piety in great Simplicity*: For then shall you possess and enjoy the greatest and sweetest Peace in the most perfect Security.

306.
True and Simple Piety is true Peace, and Security.

§. 307. This being the Case; and the Danger and Hazard of any great or everlasting Harm, being through the most tender Affection of GOD to us ward, wholly removed; if the same Father of Mercies, seeing how that Man forsook Him, and turned to the Creatures again, and fell into Error and Darkness, and no longer regarded the Light of Faith (within himself,) but rather degenerated and became utterly insensible thereof; I say, If GOD, seeing such Things, did out of Compassion, and by a new Miracle of Grace, first draw some Persons out of this most hideous Darkness into the broad Day of Faith again, and advance them to a pure and immediate Communication with Himself; if He sent them after-

307.
How we must carry ourselves towards GOD's Messengers.

wards

wards to the Rest of Mankind, and commanded them in the most sensible Manner, and such as might be most accommodated to the Stupidity of those they were sent to reclaim, to set before them their Errors, and to shew them how they must return again into the right Way; that is, How they must Turn and Convert themselves inwardly to their Creator, (§. 129. *seqq.*) and by what Means they may be enabled most conveniently to do so; and that unless they Obey their Counsels and follow their Directions, Judgment will overtake them: Ought not such and so great a Benefit to be most thankfully acknowledged and accepted: Are not such chosen Vessels and Instruments, and the Sayings and Writings, which they have spoken and delivered to us in the Name of GOD; are not such Persons, I say, and such Things to be highly esteemed, and infinitely preferred to all earthly Riches? Is it not the Duty of every One to awaken and rouse himself out of such a deadly Sleep; to open his Ears; to consider well of the Matter; to look inwardly into himself; to search
the

the Recesses of his own Conscience carefully; to humble himself deeply before GOD; to examine all Things diligently, in so far as they relate, and may be of use to himself; to retain such as he finds good, and to leave the rest, without passing any Censure upon 'em, to GOD; and finally to adhere to Him alone, with a new and uncommon Fervour, in the inward Oratory of his Heart?

§. 308. Can any Thing be more Just, Equitable or Prudent, or indeed more agreeable to Reason itself? And what has a sincere and humble Worshipper of GOD to fear in such a Case? Where is the Danger, where is the Harm in all this? Or, what occasion is there here for any Subtlety, Ingenuity, or Human Learning? May not the simplest Woman, provided she be humble, and well disposed perform all these Things with the greatest Safety, and in the highest Degree enjoy the Benefits, the Peace, and the inward Joy of Conscience, which never fail to accompany such Performances? May she not easily Answer all that's required of her with regard to the Messengers of God, and his Divine Oracles? Here we want no Art, no
Logick

308.
Nothing
more Just,
Safer, or
more Simple.

Logick, no Metaphysicks, no Criticks; Nothing more is required on our Part, but only Sincerity, Humility, and (its inseparable Companion) Docility; and finally, the Love of GOD.

309.
Love the end
of all Things.

§. 309. For that's the End of every Thing. For as GOD Himself is Love; so whatsoever He does is Love, and Love is the End He proposes in every Thing.

310.
And the Substance of all
Revelations.

§. 310. Whence LOVE is the Center and sole End of all Divine Revelations: Their whole Substance consists in setting forth the Divine Love towards us, in pressing the Duties of mutual Love, and in pointing out the Way for us to return to the Love of GOD.

311.
And the true
use that
ought to be
made of 'em.

§. 311. Whosoever therefore makes use of any Thing that comes to him under the Name of Revelation, in order to promote this Love, and thereby really advances in his Dependance upon the Divine Will; he certainly pursues the right End, and uses them to a very salutary Purpose, and in a Manner most acceptable to GOD;

312.
Altho' Error
should creep
in;

§. 312. Even altho' he may err in the Interpretation thereof as to Particulars, or receive that for Divine

vine Revelation which is not : Nay, even altho' in the Course of time, any Thing should be added to, or taken away from the true Revelations of GOD.

§. 313. For all such Things are mere Subtilities, and infinitely below the Regard of a Mind born to love and enjoy GOD Himself.

313. Which we ought not to regard.

§. 314. For Love resides in the Heart; which it unites to its Beloved by the Sacred Tyes of voluntary Subjection: Love does not fit brooding in the Brain, in order to raise Doubts, and to frame a thousand ridiculous Questions.

314. Love is not taken up in impertinent Questions and Doubts.

§. 315. Behold here then, the End, the Substance, the Utility and Use of all Divine Revelations; which is easy, plain, simple, salutary, safe and peaceful, and such as utterly subverts and destroys all Sects and Heresies. But of this, and of the Nature of the Evidence that we can have for the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures, we have treated more at large in a particular Discourse by itself.

315. The further Consideration of the Subject Matter of Revelation referred to another Discourse.

§. 316. Considering then all these Things, we cannot but conclude, That all such Criticks as now-a-days wrack their Wits, and muster up all the

316. The Criticks censured.

the far fetched Reasons they can invent, to render the Sacred Text doubtful and uncertain, are most unreasonable and perverse Scepticks, and thereby do what in them lies to under-mine and destroy the Authority of all those Sacred Testimonies : Which useless Endeavours of theirs, would in the End turn to the universal Prejudice of Mankind, if the Divine Clemency did not vouchsafe to guard and fortify all such as are Upright in Heart, against all the Insults of the Enemy from that Quarter.

317, 318.
319.
Their Impudence.

§. 317. It is a Thing surely much to be lamented, to see any One arrive to that height of Impudence, as not to be ashamed to deny that to the Sacred Writings, which they readily allow to those of *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and *Cicero*, and many others ; as that they were written by those Persons whose Names they go under, and that they contain their Doctrines.

§. 318. Is there any One that doubts, Whether there be such a Kingdom in the World, as *France*, *Denmark*, *Swedeland*, *Poland*, *Japan*, *China*, *Persia*, or whether there be such great and Capital Cities in them as is commonly reported ; Or, that the

the Emperor is now at War with the French King upon Account of the Succession to the Spanish Monarchy; Or, that the Imperial Forces under the Command of Prince Eugene, have successfully fought against the French, and the like, &c. Tho' at the same time, he never saw any of those Things: nor yet had his Information from such as were actually present.

§. 319. And are we now come to that Pass, that the Authority of the Sacred Writings, which breath nothing throughout but illustrious Piety, and which utterly rejects and condemns all Manner of Falsehood, shall be in a worse Condition, and find less Credit, than the Stories of the Heathens, or the Reports (which are very often false) of Common Fame.

§. 320. These Things relating to Reason, Faith and Divine Revelations, I have thought best to deliver in One uninterrupted Discourse: But in Answering and Refuting the Rest of this Author's Theses, I shall be more brief.

320.
'Twas tho't
best to cast
all the fore-
going Ani-
madversions
into one con-
tinued Dis-
course.

THESES

Thesis III.

The Definitions of Revelation and Testimony,

The Discovery of a Proposition or Truth (by GOD) in some extraordinary Way, is called REVELATION (divine); and the Proposition or Truth discovered, a (divine) TESTIMONY.

Animadversions.

321.
Refuted.

§. 321. Seeing the preceding Definition of FAITH is evidently false, as we have already Proved: It follows, That this Thesis which wholly depends upon the same, can be of no Moment.

For it restrains Divine Revelation to such Propositions only as in themselves include neither any Certainty nor Evidence; but are wholly and solely founded upon the extrinseck Authority of the Proposer, or upon an Opinion of his Veracity.

322, 323.
That a Revelation be made in an extraordinary Way, not necessary.

§. 322. And then again, It supposes another Quality, viz. That it be discovered in some extraordinary Way. Which our Author affirms without any good Warrant or Reason, and even thereby manifestly Contradicts his Sixth Thesis concerning

ing

ing Traditional Revelation, as he terms it. For every One may, by the Light implanted in himself, if he knows how to give good Attention to it, easily comprehend the greatest Part of such Revelations, which yet if they had not been first revealed to, and divulged by others, he had never dreamed of. Shall such therefore be raz'd out of the List of Revelations?

§. 323. Or will the Author also deny, that the Sun at Noon-day reveals and discovers every Thing that we see, (which is a parallel Case) because he does not do it in an extraordinary, but in a common and very natural Way?

§. 324. **DIVINE REVELATION** therefore, comprehends every Discovery made by Divine Light, whether it be made in an ordinary Way, as when a Mind, thoroughly purify'd, is so enlighten'd by Faith, that it easily sees and understands all Spiritual Objects whatsoever: Or, in an extraordinary Way, when under a transient Act of Irradiation, this or that Truth only is discovered to it.

§. 325. Nor do I see either any Necessity or Advantage in distinguishing so nicely between the Act of Manifesta-

324.
A better Definition of Revelation.

325.
No Necessity to distinguish the Act of Manifesta-

tion, from
the Thing
manifested.

Manifestation itself, and the Thing manifested; seeing in common Speech, both are comprehended under the Name of Revelation; nor have we any Reason to apprehend any ill Consequences from thence.

Thesis IV.

THESIS IV.

The Requi-
sites of Faith,

Divine Revelation and Testimony are essential to Divine FAITH.

Animadversions.

• 326.
Are false.

§. 326. This *Thesis* is also evidently false; as is indeed every Thing else that this Author advances. For FAITH is that very Light that reveals and discovers all Spiritual Things, (§. 153—155.) and which brings along with it, and depends upon its own Evidence.

Thesis V.

THESIS V.

The Distin-
ction of Re-
velations,

A Truth may be discovered by GOD, either mediately, by Signs made to the Sense or Imagination; or without any, immediately to the Understanding. The first, for Distinction's sake, we shall term SENSI-

SENSIBLE, and the other INTELLECTUAL Revelation.

Animadversions.

§. 327. In order to understand this Matter aright, we must have recourse to several other, and more accurate Distinctions, than this proposed by our Author.

327.
False also.

For, we perceive either the *Thing* itself present, and acting upon the Faculties corresponding thereto ; or the *Idea* of a *Thing* absent, formed in the Mind : This Experience teaches us ; nor can there possibly be any other third Kind of Perception.

Perception
twofold.

§. 328. The Faculties, whereby the Things themselves are perceived, we have called SENSES ; and that Faculty which we may compare to a Table, wherein the various Images of Things are drawn, we have termed IMAGINATION. Nor do I see how they can be more properly named.

328.
The Faculty
of Perception
on twofold.

§. 329. As therefore, there are only Two (and no more) distinct Species of Perception ; One *Real*, and the other *Ideal* :

329, 330.
There can be
no more.

§. 330.

§. 330. So likewise there can be no more but Two distinct Kinds of Perceptive Faculties, the *Senses* namely, and the *Imagination*.

331.
To them belongs the Understanding.

§. 331. To these belongs another Faculty, whereby upon Reflexion, we are conscious to ourselves of those *Real* and *Ideal* Perceptions, and thereupon contemplate, weigh and compare them one with another, and finally sollicit the Will to act. That all these Things are something distinct from Perception as such, I suppose, no Body will deny.

This then being a distinct Faculty from the Two former, we must distinguish it by some peculiar Name; and I cannot think of any more proper and convenient, than that of *Understanding*, *Knowledge* and *Wisdom*.

332.
No Revelation can be made immediately to the Understanding.

§. 332. In this Sense then, our Author is mistaken, when he distinguishes Revelation into Sensible and Intellectual. For in this Sense of the Word, there can be no Revelation nor Discovery made immediately to the Understanding.

Whatever is Revealed, is perceived either Really, or Ideally, (§. 327. and consequently, either by the Senses, or by the Imagination, (§. 330.)

(§. 330.) Therefore 'tis not made to the Understanding immediately, which only judges of Revelations, after they have been perceived either by Sense, or by Imagination,

(§. 331.)

§. 333. I know indeed, that GOD can Work immediately upon the Understanding : But then that is done, not Objectively, but Subjectively.

333.
How GOD acts immediately upon the Understanding.

Not Objectively : Because Nothing can be the Object of the Understanding ; that is, The Understanding cannot be conscious to itself of any Thing, nor judge of any Thing, but what we first perceive either by Sense or Imagination, (§. 330, 331.)

GOD therefore acts immediately upon the Understanding subjectively only ; by uniting his own Subjective Wisdom to our Understanding subjectively ; so that from thence forward, it does not understand in a Human, but after a Divine Manner, viz. with Divine Perspicuity, Evidence, and Comprehension.

§. 334. But tho' these Things very properly may, and indeed ought to be thus distinguished ; yet I am not ignorant how very seldom it has been done ;

334.
These Things not commonly distinguished so.

done; But that most of the Writers upon these Subjects, comprehend, under the Name of Pure Understanding, whatever relates to Perception in the supreme Spirit, as including both Sense and Imagination, (which last perhaps they never knew nor suspected to belong thereto) not without some Sort of Confusion.

- 335.
And yet the
Author errs
even in this
respect.

§. 335. But then, even in this Sense, our Author comes very much short of his Aim: Seeing (1) He either would not, or did not know how to distinguish this superior and pure Understanding, from the inferior and outward, and thereby confounds such Things together, as are wholly and really distinct one from the other. Yea, (2) All Intellectual Knowledge, is in his Opinion Nothing else, but *Ideal* Perceptions: For he does not allow, that we can perceive Spiritual Objects, as they are in themselves; otherwise, he had not spent so much Time about such idle Fancies; which yet is another most pernicious Error. (3) He falsely supposes, That there are no other Senses nor Imagination, but such only as are External, and belonging to the Outward Man. And Lastly, (4) He

(4) He is mistaken, in supposing, That a Thing or the truth of a Thing, cannot be perceiv'd but by *Signs* made to the Senses. As if when I see the Sun with my Eyes, I wanted any other Sign to convince me of the Truth thereof. But the Case is the very same as to Spirituals.

§. 336. We must therefore take another Method.

³³⁶
We must take another Way.

As Sense and Imagination in Man is twofold, *viz.* The superior or innermost in the supreme Spirit, the inferior or inward in the Immortal Soul; and the exterior or outward in the Natural Man, (§. 15.)

Sense and Imagination distinguished.

§. 337. So we may in the first Place divide Revelations into superior or *innermost*, made in the Supreme Spirit; inferior or *inward*, made in the Immortal Soul; and exterior or outward, made in the Outward Man.

³³⁷
The first Division of Revelations into INNERMOST, INWARD and OUTWARD.

§. 338. *Secondly*, Some are *Real*, when the Things themselves affect and strike the Senses; and others *Ideal*, when the Images only of Things are formed in our Imagination, and the naked Truths relating to them, are imprinted upon the same.

³³⁸
The Second into REAL and IDEAL.

339.
A threefold
Spirit in
Man.

§. 339. We have a threefold Spirit in us, viz. A *supreme* and divine Spirit, (§. 336.) an Immortal Soul, and an Animal or Natural Soul, adapted to this World, and animating the Outward Man.

340.
Every One
has its pro-
per Center.

§. 340. Now every one of these Spirits has its own Center, Habitation or dwelling Place, suitable to its Constitution and State, §. 251. *seqq.*

341.
In every
Center, ei-
ther GOD or
the Crea-
tures may
manifest
themselves.

§. 341. As then there are several Worlds, Centers or Principles; so likewise in every one of them, either GOD and his Perfections, or other created Things of the same Principle, may be manifested and discovered.

342.
The superior
Worlds can
manifest
themselves
to the inferi-
or; but not
vice versa.

§. 342. And the superior Worlds can, in right of their own Nature, (yet not without the Permission of GOD, the Supreme Moderator of all Things) act upon the inferior Ones, (§. 253.) and really discover themselves to them: But the inferior Ones cannot act upon, nor discover themselves to those that are their Superiors.

343.
Yet the infe-
rior are
known by
the superior
by the help

§. 343. But this notwithstanding, the Superior Spirits know those that are their Inferiors; which in what manner, and how far the Devils do it,

it, I know not: But as to Blessed of Divine Spirits that enjoy the fulness of Divine Light. Light.

§. 344. Hence there arises other Divisions of Revelations; which before I explain, I observe by the way, That whatsoever the Natural Spirit can by its own Natural Light and Industry, either Really or Ideally know and discover, ought not to be reckoned among the Number of Revelations. But that all other Manifestations or Discoveries, even of Things of this World, may very properly be ranked under that Denomination.

344.
What we understand by Revelations.

§. 345. These Things being Premised; 'tis evident, That seeing our supreme Spirit and immortal Soul are fallen into this visible Principle, and are become as Exiles from their own true Centers, that Discoveries may be made to them, two (which is the third Division of Revelations) several Ways; viz. Either when superior Agents act upon them, during their Abode in this visible Principle, or, when, being snatch'd out of it in a

345.
The Third Division of Revelations into those made either in RAPTURE or without Rapture.

Rapture, and translated into their own proper Centers, they feel and perceive such Agents, and all their Operations, as they are in themselves.

346. v.
Proved by
Examples.

* 2 Cor. ch.
xii. 2.

† *Ib.* ver. 4.

§. 346. Thus the Apostle St. Paul was caught up into the third Heaven*, and into Paradise †, and heard unspeakable Words, which 'tis not lawful for a Man to utter.

‡ Rev ch. i.
10.

And thus the whole Apocalypse is Nothing but a Narration of what John heard, saw and felt, when he was in the Spirit ‡, that is, when he was in Rapture.

Nor is it to be doubted, but that in all Ages there have been some Persons that have been so favoured of GOD; and even in these last Days, GOD has vouchsafed to raise up some, whose Writings abundantly testify, that they were like so many Spies, sent before us into the Land of Promise, that so by a faithful Relation of what they saw and heard, and tasted, and felt in those Regions, they might excite and exhort Lukewarm, Faint-hearted, and Incredulous Men (wherein, alas. we now exceed all the ancient Jews) courageously and boldly to fight that good Fight, that we may not lose

and

and come short of that inconceivable Happiness, which is prepared for us.

§. 347. Now that this Way of Revelation by *Rapture*, which is also called the Way by *Ascent*, when our Spirit being really translated into those Centers themselves, is most sensibly touched, and even dazzled with the Brightness of the Impressions of such Spiritual Objects as then present themselves to it; I say, That this Way does far exceed the* other Way (by *Descent*) where the same Spirit being mingled with the Outward Man, and remaining yet without the Boundaries of the Invisible Worlds, receives only some Influences of Heavenly Things; and that whatsoever any One perceives in such a *Rapture*, is accompany'd with infallible Evidence and Certainty, none in his Senses will presume to deny: For seeing we allow, when Visible Objects affect and strike the Outward Senses, that they thereupon beget in us infallible Evidence and Cer-

347.
Revelations
by Rapture
more sub-
lime than the
Rest.

They are
infallible.

Which we must take care not to confound with that perfect Way by *Descent* mentioned below, *Self. 378.*

tainty, it would be highly unreasonable to deny the same Privilege to Things Invisible (by whom the others are produced, and from whom they have received whatever they have) acting upon our inward Senses.

348.
There is no
danger here
of being de-
ceived.

§. 348. Nor is there any Danger here, least they confound the Creator with the Creatures: For where all Things are clearly and distinctly perceived, (even GOD Himself, as well as other Things) every one has its own distinguishing Marks, whereby it may be easily and certainly known from all the Rest. Nor is it possible for any Creature to excite or raise any Perception truly Divine. All things shine here with such Evidence, that whosoever comes within the Sphere thereof, he cannot if he would, doubt of it.

349.
The Subdivi-
sions of Re-
velations by
Rapture,
and without
Rapture.

§. 349. Both these Ways of Revelation may come upon us, either sleeping or waking, and with or without the Suspension of our outward Senses.

350.
Revelations
in the SU-
PREME
SPIRIT; of
GOD: Real

§. 350. When we really perceive GOD Himself, and his Perfections in the supreme Spirit, the Eternal Word Himself does then illumina-
nate

nate and act upon our divine Senses.

Whence our Sensations of GOD are Various, not only according to the variety of our own Senses, but also according to the Variety of the Realities in the Divine Word.

Various:

§. 351. When we perceive GOD in Spirit *ideally* only; then the *Archetypal* Wisdom of GOD cloaths the Supreme divine Imagination with divine Ideas.

351. Ideal.

§. 352. And as to the Creatures; We must distinguish between such as inhabit and live in that divine Center, or *Archetypal* World itself; and the Rest that live out of it.

352. How the Creatures are revealed to the Supreme Spirit.

The first Sort, being of the same Nature and Essence with our supreme Spirit, can without doubt act upon, and affect all the Senses thereof.

Viz. It perceives those which are in the same Divine World; Really.

§. 353. But all the Rest, that live out of that *Archetypal* World, cannot of themselves, by any means, reach nor affect the said Spirit.

353. And those that are without it.

For they are either of an inferior Nature, and then they cannot extend their Activity beyond their own Center.

Or, they are of the same Nature with our Spirit; but live out of the Medium

Medium of Communication, which is Nothing else but the divine Element.

354.
Are really
perceived by
the Intel-
lectual Sight,
by the help
of the Di-
vine Light.

§. 354. Such Things therefore are, as I conceive, no otherwise really perceived by the supreme Spirit, but by *Intellectual Vision*. For the Divine Light, which penetrates all Centers at pleasure, can and may most evidently, most clearly, and most certainly, in the Twinkling of an Eye, or in a more lasting and durable manner, discover and make known to the same, all Things whatsoever, if it be GOD's Will to have it so, as well Spiritual as Corporeal.

355.
How the
Creatures
are revealed
to the su-
preme Spi-
rit *Ideally*.

§. 355. But, GOD *Ideally* manifests all Created Things, (as well such as are within, as those that are without the divine Principle) past, present, and to come, their Properties, States, Relations, Intentions, and finally all naked Truths concerning all Things whatsoever; I say, GOD *Ideally* discovers all such Things to our Spirit, by imprinting his own *Sciagraphical* Wisdom, or some Ideas taken from the same, upon our divine Imagination.

356.
In what
Sense Things

§. 356. Now in that I have said, that some Things are *in*, and others *without*

without the Divine and Archetypal World; it must be understood as to the *Manifestation* thereof. For with Regard to his *Essence* and Amplitude, all Things are comprehended by GOD, and are in Him: But He does not every where discover the whole Infinite Sphere of his God-head.

I know not whether I speak so as to be understood: But I know not how to express my Meaning in more significant Terms. I well know what I would say, and I am likewise well assured, that what I think, does not in the least derogate from the Infinity and Omnipresence of GOD. But how or in what Terms to communicate my Sentiments to others; in that I acknowledge my Ignorance.

§ 357. Possibly I may not be mistaken, if I take what the most sublime *Johannes a Cruce* talks about the Understanding of Naked Truths, as the same with this Ideal Divine Discovery both of GOD, and of all Created Things.

§ 358. This, 'tis true, is an Ideal Knowledge; but not cold and barren, like that which arises from Ideas of our making; but is on the contrary,

are in the Divine World, or out of it.

358.
What Sort of Ideal Knowledge this is.

359.
The Nature of the Divine Ideas.

contrary, lively, efficacious and penetrating even to the Bottom of the Heart, and produced by the immediate Touch of GOD, and consequently inimitable by any Creature.

359.
The Nature
of the Di-
vine Ideas.

§. 359. For all those Divine Ideas, which GOD Himself formed within Himself, are wholly Power, Life and Light; not primary indeed, and essential to his Happiness; but secondary only, yet nevertheless truly Divine.

360.
Such Ideal
Revelations
are more
particularly
meant by the
Word Reve-
lation.

§. 360. And these *Ideal* Revelations are what for the most part we more especially mean by Revelations and Illuminations.

361.
All Revela-
tions made
to the su-
preme Spi-
rit, are in-
fallible.

§. 361. Upon the whole; we may most certainly affirm, That seeing all Revelations whatsoever in the *supreme* Spirit are made by the Assistance of the divine Light; and seeing there can be nothing that's evil in the Divine Orb; they are consequently all most certain and infallible, and cannot fail to produce divine Fruits in our Spirit.

362.
In the IM-
MORTAL
SOUL; Re-
velations
either,

§. 362. We come next to consider such *Inward* Revelations as are made in the Immortal Soul, both *Real* and *Ideal*: And as to them, I observe,
That

That some are *Proper*, which exhibit the Thing in its own proper Signification, and for its own sake; and others *Improper* and Symbolical, and such as are used in a borrowed Sense, and which denote something else than what is perceived: and that there are others of a *mixt* Nature, partaking in some Things both of the proper and improper Sort.

Proper.

Improper.

or Mixt.

Examples of the first Kind, we have, *Matth.* ch. i. 20. ch. ii. 13. *Gen.* ch. xv. 1, 12, 13. ch. xx. 3. *seqq.* ch. xxxi. 24. ch. xlvi. 2, 3, 4. Besides many more throughout the Sacred Writings.

Examples of Proper Revelations.

Instances of the second Sort, we meet with *Gen.* ch. xv. 17. and throughout the two Books of *Ezekiel* and *Revelations*.

Of the Improper.

And as to the last Kind, we have Examples thereof, *Gen.* ch. xxviii. 11—16. ch. xxxi. 10—13.

And of the Mixt.

§. 364. Again, Either the THINGS THEMSELVES are really discovered, and that either *naked*, as they are in Themselves, or cloathed under some *borrowed Shape*; or their SIMILITUDES and *Images* only, which are substantial nevertheless, and

364. Either Things themselves, or their sensible Species are perceived really.

And as to them I observe That

and are commonly called the SENSIBLE SPECIES of Things.

365.

This Distinction prov'd.

§. 365. GOD Himself suggests this Distinction: *With him, speaking of Moses, I speak Mouth to Mouth; and he sees the Lord even apparently, and not in dark Speeches, and in Similitudes,* Numb. ch. xii. 8.

366.

Our Senses may be truly affected by those Similitudes.

§. 366. That both Good and Evil Spirits can form such Similitudes, and animate them for a Time, and make use of them not only to affect the Sight, but even all the Rest of our Senses likewise, is abundantly evident from many Places throughout both the Old and New Testament: And particularly from, Gen. ch. xv. 17. ch. xxviii. 12. seqq. ch. xxxi. 10. seqq. Exod. ch. xxv. 9. ch. xxvi. 30. Dan. ch. v. 5. 1 Kings ch. xxviii. 11. seqq. Acts ch. x. 10. seqq. Rev. ch. x. 10.

367.

The Devil also can do the same.

§. 367. And that Evil Spirits can do such Things likewise, is evident from the Story of Samuel, who was raised from the Dead by the Witch of Endor, 1 Kings ch. xxviii. 11. And of CHRIST our Lord Himself, to whom the Devil in a Vision, shewed all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, Matth. ch. iv. 8. Not

to

to mention other false Visions, of whose Existence our Author himself does not doubt.

§. 368. When therefore any such sensible Species, or substantial Similitude of a Thing is seen, tho' the Rest of the Senses be likewise at the same time affected therewith, it is nevertheless properly speaking, called a *Vision*. 368.
A Vision, What?

§. 369. But if it happens to us when asleep, its called a *Vision in Sleep*; and must be distinguished from a *Dream*, which is only an Ideal Representation of a Thing imprinted in the Imagination, when we are asleep. 369.
A Vision in Sleep,
A Dream.

§. 370. If the Vision be *Symbolical*, then we may be properly said to see in *dark Sayings*. 370.
A Vision by
Ænigma's.

§. 371. That GOD discovers Himself all these several Ways, viz. So that either He Himself, or at least his Similitude appears; and that in the first Way, either *naked* as he is in himself, or *cloathed* with some other Shape; or in the latter Way, either in a *Vision* when we are awake, (and that either Properly, or Enigmatically) or in a *Vision* when we are asleep, or Lastly, in a *Dream*: I say, That GOD vouchsafes to discover Himself all these several Ways, is evident 371.
GOD also is
Revealed
those several
Ways.

dent from the Place above-mention'd, Numb. ch. xii. 6, 7, 8. *If there be a Prophet among you, says GOD Himself, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a VISION, or will speak unto him in a DREAM. But my Servant Moses, is not so, who is most faithful in all mine House: With him I speak MOUTH to MOUTH; (therefore naked and not cloathed) and he sees the LORD even apparently, and not in dark Speeches, (therefore Properly) and in Similitudes, (therefore he sees GOD Himself).* As to the Discoveries, Gen. ch. xxviii. 11—16. ch. xxxi. 10—13. ch. xlvi. 2, 3, 4. I Refer them to *Vision* in Sleep, and not to Dreams.

372.
The Creatures are also discover'd after the same Manner.

§. 372. That the Creatures may likewise be discovered all these several Ways, as well as the Creator, besides the Examples already produced, is evident from many other Places of Scripture; nor have we any reason to doubt, but that it may be so.

373.
Ideal Revelation.

§. 373. We have already Observ'd, That an *Ideal* Revelation may be made to Persons asleep in a Dream.

And that the Imagination may likewise be variously modified, as well by

by GOD as by the Creatures, when we are awake, I see no Reason to doubt.

§. 374. Now which of these Ways soever a Revelation be made by, if it be accompany'd with a Suspension of the outward Senses, 'tis call'd an *Extasy*; which differs from a *Rapture* in this; That under an *Extasy*, the Spirit, to which the Discovery is made, remains still in this Visible Principle; but in the Case of a *Rapture*, it is really translated from thence into other Regions.

374.
An Extasy,
What?
Wherein it
differs from
Rapture.

§. 375. Exterior or *Outward* Revelations admit of the like Divisions, unless it be, That the Things of the Inward Worlds, cannot, being of too subtile and refined a Nature, be perceived by our outward Senses, nor otherwise appear to them, but under assum'd Shapes, and borrow'd Appearances.

375.
Revelations
made in the
NATURAL
SPIRIT are
Cloathed,

§. 376. Thus we have very many Instances of Proper Apparitions; as for Example: *Gen.* ch. xvi. 7, 8. *seqq.* ch. xii. 7. ch. xiii. 14. ch. xvii. 1. *&c.* ch. xviii. ch. xix. ch. xxii. ch. xxvi. 2—5. ch. xxxii. 1, 2, 24—29. ch. xxxv. 9. *Exod.* ch. iii. ch. iv. 1—27. ch. xiii. 21. ch. xix. ch. xxiv. 9, 10,

376.
and are ei-
ther Proper.

10, &c. ch. xxxiii. 9, 10, 11, 18,
 &c. Lev. ch. ix. 23, 24. Numb. ch. xii.
 ch. xiv. 10, &c. ch. xvi. 19, &c. ver. 43,
 &c. Luke ch. i. 11, &c. ver. 28, &c.

377.
 Or Symbolical.

§. 377. And as to Outward Symbolical Revelations, we have Instances thereof, Dan. ch. v. 5. ch. ii. 1, 19, 29, &c. Gen. ch. xxxvii. 5-7. 9. ch. xl. 8-13, 16-19. ch. xli. 1-33.

378.
 Another Sort of Revelation by the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

§. 378. But besides all these, there is yet another Sort of Revelation, the chiefest and most sublime that can be, which is made by a *Plenary* Descent of the Holy Spirit into the *Soul* thro' the Spirit, to fix and consummate therein the State of Glorification, and to discover inwardly in the Center thereof, the Glory of the *New Jerusalem* descending from Heaven, (*Rev.* ch. xxi. 2.) so that, the Inward Man being wholly transform'd, GOD is All in All, and the Sole Mover and Moderator of all the Faculties thereof; and the Outward Man serves only as a Cover to this Inward Glory, and as a suitable and convenient *Medium*, whereby to hold Communion with, and to be Serviceable to the Rest of Corrupted Men.

In

In such a Person GOD Himself sees, feels, hears, understands, speaks, and does every Thing. Such a Person sees himself in GOD, and GOD in Himself; he sees by his Seeing, he hears by his Hearing, and understands by his Understanding.

§. 379. And that Man, even in this Life, may arrive to this Pitch of Perfection, the Transfiguration of **CHRIST**, * *Who was made like unto us in all Things, Sin only excepted*, is an evident Proof.

379.
Possible in
this Life.
Phil. ch.
ii. 7. Heb.
ch. iv. 15.

And the Example of *Moses*, as Related, *Exod. ch. xxiv. 29, &c.* whose Face shone upon his Talking with the LORD, is a clear Confirmation of the same Truth.

And this, as I conceive, is the Reason why GOD put such a Difference between him and the Rest of the Prophets: *But my Servant Moses, says He, is not so, who is most faithful in all mine House; with him I speak Mouth to Mouth; he sees the Lord apparently, and not in dark Speeches, and in Similitudes.* For all the Rest of the Prophets, and all the People, saw the LORD in the Cloud, and his Glory; and consequently, they only saw him cloathed under a borrowed Shape and Appearance;

pearance; but *Moses* saw Him naked, as He is in Himself: Now in this Manner He cannot be seen, but only by his own Sight, intimately, subjectively and substantially united to ours: Such and so great is the Dignity of this Sort of Revelations above all others!

380.

Of the Certainty of Revelations.

§. 380. We must now in the last Place, briefly Consider the Certainty or Uncertainty of these several Sorts of Revelations.

A General Rule.

We must therefore lay this down for a general Rule, That we ought to judge of the Tree by the Fruit thereof: A good Revelation cannot bring forth evil Fruit; nor can good Fruit proceed from an evil Revelation.

381.

What Revelations are Certain?

§. 381. We have already Observ'd, That all such Revelations as are made in the supreme Spirit, cannot but be good, and infallible, and that they must by Consequence, bring forth good Fruits (§. 361.): And the same we have proved with regard to such as are made in *Rapture*, even altho' they be made in the Immortal Soul (§. 347.). And as to those that are made by the Descent of the Holy Spirit, none in his right Senses can doubt of them, (§. 378.).

It

It remains then, That we Examine such only as are made; either in the Natural Spirit, or without any Rapture or Descent, in the eternal Soul.

What are not?

§. 382. And here again, where Things are perceived by the Senses naked, and as they are in themselves, the Certainty is infallible *ex parte Rei*: For what I perceive naked, that I truly perceive; and I perceive it so as it is; otherwise I should not perceive it naked but cloathed.

382.
Naked Things are perceived after an infallible manner.

§. 383. But as to Things cloathed, or the Similitudes of Things, or the Ideas in the Imagination: In all such I confess, there is great Uncertainty.

383.
But Things cloathed and the Similitudes and Ideas of Things are Uncertain.

For all such Revelations are made in the inferior Part; whereby we hold a Communion with other Creatures of this Principle, and even with such as are of an Angelical; yea, and of a Diabolical Nature.

Because they are made in the inferior Part.

But all Corruption is in its own Nature subject to Evil Spirits, and they can act upon and modify the same as they please, unless, the Divine Clemency interpose for our sakes, and restrain them.

Whose Corruption is subject to Evil Spirits.

Hence

It

Diabolical
Apparitions,
Inspirations,
Voices,
Tastes, Ideas,
Extasies,

Hence then, we have no Reason to doubt, but that the Enemy, that Grand Impostor, who can transform himself into an Angel of Light, can, by the Permission of Almighty GOD, form Apparitions, Inspirations, Voices, Tastes, and most subtle Ideas, and perform many Wonderful and amazing Things, and under a counterfeit Appearance, present them to us either sleeping or waking, and that either with, or without Extasy.

384.
Yet the Error is not in the Perception itself.

§. 384. And yet even in this Case, there is no Uncertainty, Damage, nor Mistake in the *Perception itself*.

For whatever I perceive, that is: Otherwise, I could not perceive it: Nor can it be an Evil, or an Error, If I only affirm in my Mind, or by Word of Mouth, that it is.

385.
But in the too hasty Judgment of REASON.

§. 385. Wherein then does the Danger lie; and how shall we precisely find out the baneful Herb under which the Serpent lurketh? It is REASON alone, which according to its natural and wonted Activity, too hastily judges and concludes that to be in the Thing-perceived, which yet was not included in the *Passive Perception itself*.

§. 386.

§. 386. In order thereto avoid the Danger of making rash and groundless Inferences, guard against the Activity of Reason, and forbear to pass a hasty Judgment in such Cases; and then the whole Host of Infernal Fiends will never be able to hurt you; All their vain Attempts, will then only turn to their own Reproach, and to your greater Glory.

386.
We must not go beyond what we really perceive.

§. 387. My Meaning is this, The Adversary of Mankind, may in some Measure, counterfeit the Truth, but can never equal it.

387.
The Enemy cannot come up to the Truth.

Therefore, when any Revelation carries along with it most evident and unquestionable Marks of Truth, so that a sincere, humble, and pious Heart, cannot doubt nor mistrust the same; in that Case, you are secure in receiving it, and have Nothing to fear: Yea, it would be a Sin to do otherwise.

Where a Revelation carries invincible Evidence with it, there we have Nothing to fear.

§. 388. But perhaps this is what does not usually happen, but to very pure Souls indeed, and to such as have by a long Use and Custom had their Senses much exercised in Spirituals.

388.
Which possibly does not happen, but to Souls of great Experience.

§. 389. But whensoever such evident and unquestionable Marks of Truth

389.
When a Revelation does

not bring
such Evi-
dence with
it, we must
suspend our
Judgment.

Truth do not accompany the Revelation itself; which may sometimes happen to the purest Souls; we must then act cautiously: We must not immediately reject every Thing, as a Diabolical Illusion; nor are we presently to embrace it as a truly Divine Revelation.

390.
Until GOD
inwardly
approve
thereof.

§. 390. What then? We must suspend our Judgment a little, until in the innermost Recess of the Mind, and in a most profound Silence and Abstraction from all Things else, we propose the whole Matter to GOD, and receive his Approbation: Or, until the Fruits appear to be evidently Divine, and consequently demonstrate the Divinity of the Root from whence they spring.

And in this, all those who have made the greatest Proficiency in the Spiritual Life, unanimously agree with me.

391.
Another
Cause of false
Imaginations.

An Imagination over-heated.

§. 391. But besides this Grand Impostor, there are some that derive false Revelations from another Cause, namely, from an intense, inflamed, or over-heated *Imagination*; which is peculiar to Man; for as much, as it can form to itself both Visions, and Articulate Voices.

§. 392.

§. 392. Which, seeing it cannot be ascribed to the Imagination as such, according to the Notion we have given of it above, (§. 21.) I conceive, it must be understood with regard to the *Intension* (or less state) thereof.

392.
Which ought not to be ascribed to the Imagination itself, but to the *Intension* thereof.

§. 393. Now this *Intension* of the Imagination, proceeds from Nothing else but from a vehement and inordinate *Desire* after such Extraordinary Revelations.

393.
Which arises from a great Desire.

§. 394. This then alone is both the Fire and the Artist, in which, and by whom the Imagination is inflamed, and such Revelations formed.

394.
This is both the Fire and the Artist.

§. 395. For in the *Desire* of Man, there is a certain *Magic Power*, as I may say, of creating within itself, whatsoever it vehemently desires.

395.
Because of its Magic Vertue.

§. 396. But for as much as such a *Desire* of Revelations, cannot but be Criminal; I can scarce believe but that the watchful Enemy co-operates therewith.

396.
To Desire Revelations, Criminal.

§. 397. But be that as it will, there is no doubt, but that if the Cause be taken away, the Effect will cease:

397.
Which must therefore be wholly destroyed.

Suppress then and check the very first Motions of Desire after Extraordinary Revelations: And for the more

more security, chuse rather to shun and to deprecate, than to desire them.

398.
Danger and
Safety in
What?

§. 398. For whatever Danger threatens us, it arises solely from our own Activity: On the other hand, all our Safety consists in being Passive.

Because where the Creature ceases, there GOD operates; and where He operates, there is every good Thing.

399.
Even against
the Snares of
the Imagi-
nation.

§. 399. And thus every One may sufficiently fortify himself even against the Snares of his own Imagination.

400.
Another
Danger from
inordinate
Love.

§. 400. By these Means we may guard against false Revelations. But there is yet another Danger that threatens us (notwithstanding that a Revelation may be true) arising from an *inordinate Cleaving* of the Heart to 'em; which in time produces and occasions many Errors.

For who has so carefully searched all the dark Corners of his own most deceitful Heart, that he has Nothing left to fear from thence?

And who is so wholly dead to his own Affections, as not to have any the least Inclination to adhere to such most grateful Sensations themselves; but on the other Hand, chuses with

with his whole Heart, as he ought, to contemplate and rest fully satisfy'd in GOD alone, the Giver of all Things?

Or, who has so compleatly root-ed out all Self-complacency and Delight, as not easily to suffer him-self to be persuaded, That such Sen-sations as he feels, are most sublime, and even wholly Divine; and that he is then in a very high Measure en-dued with the Spirit? Those that in the Beginning of their Conversion, meet with such Tryals, are more especially obnoxious to this Danger.

§. 401. Nor is it so easy a Matter for any One wholly to withdraw his Heart from those Pleasures, to pre-serve it pure and sacred to GOD, and to depend upon his good Pleasure only, as it is generally reckoned to be.

401. Which 'tis difficult to guard a- gainst.

For most commonly, we impose upon ourselves very grossly as to this Point, which I myself have observed in a Person of good Inclinations.

§. 402. Humility alone then, is in this Case, the safest Shield. But such is the Blindness of our Minds, that we often think we are humble, when we are not.

402. Humility the safest Shield.

423
We must be
vigilant.

And must
sacrifice all
Things to
GOD.

Things not
to be e-
steemed for
their own
sake.

But only as
Means.

424
Of the Security
of those

§. 403. It is therefore of the last Importance, to be very vigilant on such Occasions, and to have recourse to fervent Prayer, and to offer up ourselves, all our Discoveries, and every Thing else, as one sincere and continual Sacrifice to GOD, that so in Consequence thereof he may endue us with a profound Humility; that He may mercifully defend and keep us from all the Snares of the Enemy; and that we may not esteem any Thing that we feel, for its own sake, as if it was the Thing itself to which we ought to aspire, or beyond which we could not advance; But that we may look upon them as Means only afforded us in order to promote a true and naked Denial of all Things, and to induce and assist us wholly to resign ourselves to the free Will of GOD; that so finally, we may always prefer GOD to all and every Thing else, and have recourse to Him in the innermost Fund of the Heart, and therein apprehend, and for ever acquiesce in Him alone, through naked and obscure Faith, as He is in Himself.

§. 404. Thus much shall suffice, as to the Security of those to whom Revelations

of Revelations.

Revelations are made, And as to those, to whom they may afterwards be Communicated, we have already (§. 302.) sufficiently shewn how they ought to govern themselves.

§. 405. But all these Things, must be understood as concerning Extraordinary Revelations.

For as to what relates to the Ordinary ones; such as are all the Operations of divine Faith in the Heart, which are essential to Salvation; and which do summarily consist in a lively and efficacious Sense of the infinite Excellency and Loveliness of GOD and CHRIST, and of the universal Corruption and Nothingness of our own Nature: These, and such like, are so evident, that we cannot possibly doubt of 'em; they are the sole Aim, the ultimate End, and the unalterable Center, to which all Divine Revelations are levell'd and directed; and to which we must also refer them, if we truly desire and expect to reap any salutary Benefit from 'em.

§. 406. Nor is it at a venture, that I call these ordinary Operations of divine Light in the Heart; and which are necessary to Salvation, by the

to whom Revelations are Communicated.

Ordinary Revelations, What?

They are infallible.

and are justly called REVELATIONS.

Name of Revelations; for I have
CHRIST Himself for my Author,
Who, when Simon Peter told him,
Thou art Christ the Son of the Living
God; answered, Blessed art thou Simon
Bar-jona, for Flesh and Blood hath not
revealed it to thee, but my Father which
is in Heaven, Matth. ch. xvi. 16, 17.

THE SIS VI.

Thes. VI.

Revelation
Original and
Traditional.

Divine Revelation may be consider-
ed with Respect either to the Person
to whom it was first made; Or, to others
to whom it is imparted by him. In the first
Sense it may be named Original, in the
latter Traditional Revelation.

THE SIS VII.

Thes. VII.

Some have
been mista-
ken as to
Revelations.

Experience of all Ages Demonstrates,
That Men have been mistaken in this
Affair, accounting that Divine Reve-
lation, which was not such; and judg-
ing what was not, to be a Divine Testi-
mony.

THE SIS VIII.

Thes. VIII.

And others
have wilful-
ly imposed

There have not also been wanting those,
who have vouched for Divine Revela-
tion

tion and Testimony, *what they knew* upon the Rest.
was not so.

Animadversions.

§. 407. There is Nothing in any of these Positions, but what I can readily Assent to, without any Prejudice or Danger to the Truth.

THESES IX.

It is therefore of the last Importance to distinguish aright between True and False or Pretended Divine Revelation and Testimony.

Animadversions.

§. 408. I do not deny, but that it is a Matter of great Consequence to distinguish true from false Revelations. But the Danger is more on this Side to whom they are first made, than on his or theirs to whom they are afterwards imparted : And in both Cases, it solely consists in the Corruption of Man, and in the Activity of Reason; which, seeing we will neither wait for the certain, clear, and peaceful Light of Faith;

nor practise the Truth, according to what we know thereof, naturally leads us into Darkness and Error, §. 183-188.

409. It concerns us to know the Danger, but much more to avoid it.

§. 409. It is therefore of very great Importance to know this twofold Cause of all our Danger: But above all Things, it concerns us to avoid and destroy it in ourselves.

410. By what Means this is to be done? by naked Faith.

410. And this indeed, in such as at first perceive inferior Revelations in the inward Sense or Imagination, is by much the most difficult Thing to do, (§. 400, &c.) but not impossible; for whosoever, being deeply sensible of the Insufficiency and Subtlety of his own Reason, in Simplicity of Heart, and in Humility, and in naked and obscure Faith, sincerely resigns himself to the tender Care, and merciful Protection of GOD, which cannot but always accompany such a Disposition of Mind, He can never fall into any dangerous Error or Mistake. §. 403.

411. Which can only secure us against all Temptations.

§. 411. Which naked, obscure, simple, humble and sincere Faith, is alone a safe and sufficient Guard against all the Snares which all our Enemies can either by the Help of Reason,

Reason, or of the outward Imagination,
prepare and lay for us.

§. 412. And by the same Method,
all the Dangers arising from Tradition-
al Revelations, may yet more easily
be avoided, as I have already
shown at large, §. 332.

412.
Even with
regard to
Tradition-
al Revelations,
it is to be
known that
the Danger
is not to be
avoided.

THESE X.

The certain Knowledge that a Revela-
tion and Testimony proceed from GOD,
is of Necessity presupposed to a DIVINE
FAITH.

Thes. X.
By which
The require-
ment of Faith
the certain
Knowledge
that a Reve-
lation is
from GOD.

Animadversions.

§. 413. So far from it, that we
must maintain the quite contrary.
That the Certainty that a Re-
velation proceeds from GOD, does of
Necessity presuppose Divine FAITH,
which bears Evidence to the same.
For Nothing is evidently known but
by Light : And Divine Things can
only be known by Divine Light,
which is FAITH, and which depends
upon its own Evidence, (§. 153—
§. 176, 177, 180.)

413.
The contra-
ry demon-
strated.

THE XII

THE 812 XII

That this
Knowledge
must be at-
tained by
Reason.

*The Certain Knowledge must be at-
tained, either by REASON, or by
FAITH. Not by both. For if both
were, it must presuppose itself; (Prop. 3.)
And there will be a Procession to In-
finity: (Prop. 4.) Therefore by REA-
SON, or by FAITH, or by both, or by
neither, a REASONABLE BEING.*

Animadversions.

414.
Is false.

§. 414. Seeing the Xth and IVth
Theſes, upon which this depends, are
most evidently false, (§. 326. 413.)
this must consequently fall of itself.

Theſ. XII.

THE 812 XII

That the
Certainty of
Reason is
presuppos'd,

*The Certainty then of REASON
presupposed of necessity to that of FAITH.*

Animadversions.

415.
Is equally
false.

§. 415. This is refuted in the same
Manner as the preceding, in as much
as it is only a Confectary drawn from
thence, and consequently deserves
to be no more regarded than that

THE

THESES XIII.

Thes. XIII.

Whoever therefore overthroweth the Certainty of REASON, by Destroying the Foundation, ipso facto, subverts that of FAITH: And to pretend Divine REVELATION for what is Inconsistent with, or Contradictory to REASON, is but absurdly to Trifle, and unworthy a REASONABLE BEING.

To deny the Certainty of Reason is to subvert Faith.

Animadversions.

§ 416. By no Means: seeing it is a very gross, as well as a pernicious Error in this Author to suppose REASON to be the Foundation of FAITH, (IX. 107. 110. 1178.) in Proof of which, he has offered Nothing to the purpose (§. 414, 415). But in that he says, To pretend Divine Revelation for what is inconsistent with, or contradictory to Reason, is but absurdly to trifle; It wants a farther Explication in order to set it in its due Light.

§ 417. If by Reason, be meant, what is true, what is right, what is just, and what is perfectly agreeable to the Nature and Being of Things;

Refuted.

IX. 107

IX. 107

IX. 107

417. In what Sense Revelations are not contrary to Reason.

Animadversions on Thesis XIII.

It is certain, no Revelation can contradict Reason in that Sense: For GOD, who is the Supreme Verity, Equity and Justice itself, and the Maker of Nature, and who cannot deny nor act contrary to Himself, can never reveal any Thing, but what is true, right and just, and such as it is in itself.

The state of the Question.

But whether any Revelation has these Qualities or not; and consequently, whether it ought to be acknowledged for Divine or not; and by what Light or Faculty we can and ought to examine and distinguish the same, is the Question.

If the Answer be made, by the Light of Nature and Reason, I deny it.

For Reason is wholly incapable of any true Spiritual Knowledge, (§. 107, &c.): And to think, that Things above the Sphere of Nature (such as GOD and his Operations) can be comprehended or discovered by the Light of Nature, is highly absurd, §. 112.

This then cannot be done but by the Light of Faith, and an Understanding illuminated with Divine Light.

- 418. And here on this Occasion it may be of use to observe, That those that so much exclaim against Contradictions and Absurdities, do yet very fallaciously use the Word Reason in a quite different Sense from that in Dispute. In this Dispute about FAITH and REASON, the main Controversy is about the Faculty of the Mind that knows, and the Light whereby it is enabled to know any Thing; but as to the Causes and Arguments, which properly belong to the Things themselves, and which in common Speech are called Reasons, they are wholly foreign to the Matter in Debate. These, as to Spirituals, we affirm, cannot be known by Reason (that is, by the inferior and active Understanding) or the Light of Nature; but by a Divine Sense alone, and a suitable Understanding, (in as much as they are solely the Faculties suited to, and capable of such Objects) illuminated inwardly by the Light of Faith. And this is so clear and evident, that it even arises Naturally from the Consideration of the Terms themselves. This then, is what we maintain and affirm; this is what our

The Fallacy lies in the Equivocation of Reason.

Author ought, if possible, to have Refuted.

Thes. XIV.

The Requi-
sites of Tra-
ditional Re-
velation.

THESES XIV. No Man can ever have more (well grounded) Assurance of the Truth of what he receiveth by Traditional Revelation, than he hath (1) That its Author designed not to impose upon others, pretending Revelation when he had none, (2) That its Author was not deceived himself, taking what was not, for Divine Revelation: (3) That he mis-taketh not the true Meaning of the Signs used by the Author to convey it to others: And all this, upon supposal he hath the Revelation at first hand: But, if from the second, third, fourth or fifth hand, those Difficulties, with some variation pro Ke Nata, must be apply'd to each of the in-tervening Persons.

Animadversions.

419.
They are

§. 419. These Conditions are evi-
dently False, directly contrary to all
the Ends of Revelations, Unprofita-
ble and Impossible; and consequen-
tly, are Nothing but the ridiculous
Inventions of Blind Reason.

False.

They are evidently false: Because
the inward Light of Faith in well-
disposed Minds, bears Evidence even
to a Traditional Revelation: which
unless

unless it did, no such Revelation could ever be received: For no Man can ever be so clearly convinced of the Truth of such a Revelation in Point of Argument; but that Reason may always find something of other to object against it. Yea, it is GOD alone that opens and disposes the Hearts of Men, by the Help of his own Divine Light, to receive the Word offered them, §. 181, 182.

Acts ch. xvi. 14.

These Conditions are also directly contrary to all the Ends of all Divine Revelations. For all Revelations are only made, in order to awaken stupid and senseless Men, to excite them to look inwardly into themselves, and to submit themselves in all Sincerity to be taught and instructed by the inward and divine Light of FAITH, (181, 182.) and consequently lead to Simplicity and Immediate FAITH. But this is what we neither will, nor ever can do, if we follow this Author's Method: For whosoever will use the same, he will be so perplexed and distracted with infinite Varieties of inexplicable Doubts, and with the Activity of his own Reason, that

And contrary to the Scope of Revelations.

he will never be able to fix nor arrive at any Certainty in any Thing. But by such a Method we can never attain any true Knowledge of Things Divine, §. 107, &c.

And Unprofitable.

Such an accurate and endless Disquisition would likewise be very Unprofitable: For there is another Way of guiding ourselves with regard to all Sorts of Revelations, not only without any Danger, but also with the greatest Advantage; and such as for Brevity, Simplicity, Satisfaction, Safety and Sufficiency, infinitely transcends all others, §. 102—115.

And Impossible.

Finally, That the said Conditions are impossible, is evident upon Inspection.

So that upon the whole, these and such like *Postulata*, ought by rights to be looked upon, not only as trifling, but as the impious Inventions of Blind (or rather Diabolical) Reason.

Thes. XV.

THESIS XV.

Other Requisites.

'Tis evident to the Considerer, That in this Case is pre-supposed the Certainty not only (1) of REASON in general & but also (2) of the right Use of it by the

Author

Author and Intervening Persons; And
(3) of their VERNACULAR
But by such a Method we can never
obtain any true Knowledge of Things

§ 420. As many Absurdities often follow from one! So the ridiculous Assertions in the foregoing Thesis have likewise produced these. And seeing we have already Demonstrated that they are Nothing but the idle Inventions of the Heart of Man, (§ 416-419.) It follows plainly, that these likewise are equally false, and foreign to the Purpose.

THESES XVI. Thes. XVI.

It is impossible One can have more Certainty of the Truth of what He supposed Communicated to him by Original sensible (Divine) Revelation, Than he has (1) That he understands aright the Meaning of the Signs: (2) That these are from G O D. Other Re-
quisites still.

Animadversions.

§ 421. We have already (§ 327-331) observed how erroneously and inaccurately our Author divides Revelations, Other Re-
quisites still.
How far
they are
true.

velations into Senſible and Intellectual.

What the Author affirms here is evidently falſe with reſpect to Revelations purely and immediately Divine, which being made in the Divine Senſes of the Supreme Spirit, are always accompany'd with the higheſt and moſt eminent degree of Evidence and Certainty (§. 391.). As alſo with regard to Revelations made in the immortal Soul, when the Objects themſelves are perceived by the inward Senſes (§. 347—382). Therefore what he affirms in this *Theſis*, can only hold true with regard to ſuch Revelations as are made by Angels in dark Speeches and in Similitudes, in and upon the Senſes and Imagination.

Theſ. XVII.

THEſIS XVII.

The Certain Knowledge of theſe two Particulars, is attainable only by Reaſon; otherwiſe there muſt be Revelation upon Revelation to Infinity.

Animadverſions.

423.
Is Falſe;

§. 422. This Affertion is, according to Cuſtom, falſe likewiſe, being grounded

grounded upon *Things* which have been refuted already, (§. 414.) For such Certainty is not attainable by the Light of Reason, but by the Light of Faith.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART. XVIII.

Original Intellectual (Divine) Revelation, is the Perception of a Truth in that Understanding hitherto unknown, raised there Super-naturally (by GOD) without the Assistance of any such Natural Causes, as use to excite Thoughts in

Animadversions.

§. 423. This Proposition is false in every Particular. For we have already rejected the Division of Revelations into Sensible and Intellectual, as inadequate and erroneous, §. 327

§. 424. This Author is also mistaken in tacitly denying any other Divine Revelation, but what is immediately such, and in rejecting those that are mediately Divine. Does not every Truth and every good Thing come from GOD? Are there not in Holy

The Definition of Intellectual Revelation.

423. Is also false.

424. A Revelation may be Divine, tho' it come not immediately from GOD.

Holy Scripture many Angelical Apparitions and Revelations? And will this Author presume to strike all these several Sorts out of the List of Divine Revelations? Or, were they made without the Assistance of any such Natural Causes, as is to excite Thoughts in us? What does he mean then by such a monstrous Supposition?

425.
How Revelations are made Supernaturally.

§. 425. But why does he put in the Word *Supernaturally*? If by it he means, That none by the sole Light and Industry of his own corrupted Natural Spirit, which we hold of this Visible Principle, can make these Discoveries; I grant, that in that respect, every Revelation is made *Supernaturally*.

But if he thinks to infer from thence, That no Angelical Apparition, or other Perception of Things Invisible, ought to be looked upon as a Revelation, or at least, as a Divine one; he is again mistaken.

For most certainly, all the Angelical Worlds are within the Sphere of Nature. Who then but a Madman can doubt, but that they, as well as the Things of this Visible Principle, may strike and affect the Senses suited and

adapted

adapted to themselves, and consequently really and truly discover themselves to them.

§. 426. Can a Mathematician first define Things as he pleases, and then afterwards lay down the same Definitions as Axioms and Principles? By such a new and unaccountable Method, which was never so much as heard nor thought of, but in this Bold and Licentious Age, it would be an easy Matter to demonstrate any Thing, true or false.

426.
Definition:
not arbitrary.

But as in such a Case, the Terms would be Nothing but Chimera's, having Nothing really corresponding to 'em; so the supposed Demonstrations, founded upon such Principles, would be only fictitious, that is, they would be of no Force nor Weight.

§. 427. But possibly, even the Word *Thought*, is not without some Mystery of Iniquity; I am sure, its very erroneously substituted in the Room of the Word *Perception*.

427.
Thinking,
erroneously
confounded
with Perception.

For tho' every Perception may in a large Sense be called Cogitation or Thought; yet every Cogitation or Thought, is not Perception. This considered in itself, is Passive; but that comprehends also the Active Ope-

Operations, not only of the Understanding, but even of the Will also.

Why then are these confounded? If not with a Design to draw us tacitly into that wicked Belief, That Divine Revelations differ little or nothing from the ordinary Thoughts of Men; and consequently, that 'tis with the greatest Difficulty, that they can be distinguish'd one from the other. Which is a Suggestion that would highly derogate from the Dignity of Revelations.

I don't accuse the Author of such a wicked Design; but I cannot but think, that the Adversary of Mankind, who has all along so grossly imposed upon his Reason, had it in his View.

Thes. XIX.

THESIS XIX.

New Requisites in order to judge of Revelations.

Before Assent be given to an Intellectual Proposition, upon Account of the Divine Veracity, 'tis necessary to know (1) All the Natural Springs and Originals, Causes, and Occasions, from whence an Intellectual Perception may proceed: (2) That the Thought in Question ariseth from none of 'em: (3) All the super-natural created Causes capable

ble to raise an Intellectual Perception;
(4) That none of those did excite this
under Consideration: (5) That this
Thought is not such as being Erroneous,
hath no Positive Cause at all; otherwise
we can never be Certain that it proceeded
from GOD.

Animadversions.

§. 428. All these Things are af-
firmed and laid down without any
Proof or Foundation to support them.
For, first, The Definition of Intel-
lectual Revelation (*Thef.* XVIII.) is
very confused, insufficient and erro-
neous, §. 423—427.

Then again, It is a gross Absur-
dity and Contradiction, to think,
That Perceptions truly Divine (that
is, such as infinitely transcend all
Creatures, Natural or Supernatural)
can be excited in us by any Created
Cause.

Lastly, The Perceptions produced
in us by Created Causes, cannot but
be infinitely different from those
which an Infinite and Immense GOD
Himself raises in us: And conse-
quently, they have each such imme-
diate and peculiar Marks of Distincti-
on,

428.
False also.

214 *Animadversions on Thefts* XX, XXI.

only, that we cannot but clearly and certainly know and distinguish one from the other.

Theft, XX.

That these cannot be known but by Reason.

THESES XX.

'Tis Evident, we can come to the Knowledge of these Five Particulars, by no other way than by the careful Exercise of REASON; else we shall lose ourselves in an Excursion to Infinity.

Animadversions.

429.
Retuted,

§. 429. Seeing those Five Conditions are false and erroneous, (§. 428.) It follows that Reason has Nothing to do in this Affair. But besides, this Criterion of Reason destroys itself, in as much as it implies a Contradiction in Terms, (§. 417, 418.). For surely, to say, that Reason, which judges by the Light of Nature only, can discern Things that transcend Nature, is a downright Contradiction.

Theft, XXI.

THESES XXI.

That Faith Presuppofes the right ex-

From the particular Enumeration preceding, as well as from the general Na-

ture

IXX. *XX of Revelations* 245
 ture of REASON, FAITH, REVELA-
 TION and TESTIMONY (Divine), it
 appears (1) That Divine FAITH presup-
 seth divine Revelation and Testimony, cer-
 tainly known to be such; Which (2) Pre-
 supposes the right Exercise of REASON
 and Certainty thereof: Wherefore (3)
 Divine FAITH presupposeth the right
 Exercise of REASON and Certainty
 thereof.

Animadversions.

§. 430. Seeing none of our Au-
 thor's foregoing *Theses*, and especial-
 ly his Notions of Reason, Faith and
 Revelation, could bear a strict and im-
 partial Examination, 'tis evident,
 That a true Conclusion cannot be
 drawn from such false Premises. In
 particular, The first Conclusion is
 Refuted, §. 426, 413. The second,
 §. 414, 415, 416. And the third, be-
 ing only an Inference from the last
 preceding *Thesis*, is, like that, false
 and erroneous also.

THESIS XXII.

Thes. XXII.

Seeing it is much more Certain, that
 RIGHT REASON is Infallible, than
 That the first-
 Pre-
 Reason is
 That greater than

That of
Faith.

That the Particular Use thereof about Revelation, presupposed by Divine FAITH, is RIGHT; it evidently follows that the Certainty of RIGHT REASON surpasseth that of DIVINE FAITH.

In fine, We are either left an easy Prey to every Seducing Spirit; Or, have REASON assigned us, to distinguish the TRUE from the FALSE REVELATION.

Animadversions.

431.
Refuted.

§. 431. Seeing all that this Author has hitherto advanced, is Nothing but the poor and superficial Inventions of blind Reason; it naturally follows, That this last Conclusion, cannot but be equally vain and groundless. Besides, it is worth observing, that the Author crowns his Work at last with a manifest Contradiction: For to suppose Right Reason in Man, wholly and in every part corrupted, so that from Head to Foot, there is Nothing sound in him, is as Consistent as a Sick sound Man, a streight Obliquity, or Iron Wood, &c. Whence 'tis Evident, That Right Reason in Man as he is at present, is

a meer Non-Entity; which yet according to our Author, surpasses Divine FAITH, and must distinguish the TRUE from the FALSE REVELATIONS. What then can we make of such a Judgment but a mere Non-entity likewise? And what is all that Divinity that is grounded upon such a Principle, but a mere Non-entity, that is, a vain, dead and barren Science, such as has no real Existence, Inconsiderable, Foolish, and finally Nothing at all? Such a noble and so firm a Foundation of *Theosophick* Knowledge, has this Author laid! Oh! what a Degenerate Age do we now live in!

§. 432. I shall now at last Conclude with an Answer to Two Objections, which are usually brought on this Occasion. First, It is alledged, That the Doctrine of CHRIST is perfectly agreeable to *Right Reason*.

Answer. It is indeed perfectly agreeable thereto, if you take Reason as we have defin'd it, §. 417, 418; for that which is Right, True, Just and Good. It is likewise so far agreeable thereto, that a Man bred up from his Infancy in the Principles of the Christian Religion, may by the Help

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of;

432.
Obj. That the Doctrine of CHRIST is agreeable to Reason.

Answer.

of his Reason form some Ideas relating to the Doctrines thereof, §. 113. But that Reason alone, if we had never had any Revelation, could have discovered those Evangelical Truths, remains yet to be proved: and to me, when I consider the universal Degeneracy and Corruption of all Ages and Nations, seems altogether incredible. On the contrary, so far have the Wise and the Learned of all Ages and Countries been from discovering such salutary Truths, tho' they always resign'd themselves to the Guidance of Reason, (for they are defin'd to be, and now, alas! may with too much Propriety of Speech, be called Reasonable Animals) that they rather utterly lost the true Knowledge of the True GOD, and the true Way of Worshipping Him, as their first Parents taught it; and instead of that, gave themselves up headlong to most abominable Absurdities, and to all manner of Vice. Yea, how few are there even in the Christian World, that do not entertain false Notions about Religion: So that the Generality of Mankind condemns every Particular Person, and every Particular

Particular again condemns all the rest, and every One condemns another? And in this glorious Work, do not the Learned, who make it the main Business of their Lives, to improve in Sense and Reason, act the chiefest Part? And yet after all this, shall we still continue to be so blind and stupid, as not to see and perceive the Nature and Worth of Reason, and how unjustly it has been celebrated by some as the most transcendent Treasure? But let us suppose, (which yet is impossible) That Reason can of itself form true Ideas of Things Spiritual; what are they after all, but Ideas, that is, mere Pictures? and how infinitely short must they come of the Things themselves, which yet alone can only nourish and satisfy our Appetites?

§. 144. §. 433. The other Objection that may be made, is, That it seems strange, and hardly reconcileable, that I should exclaim so much against Reason, when yet this little Piece throughout, is Nothing but one continued Thread of Rational Inferences connected together, and deduced yone from another.

Ans. I have offered

433.

Obj. 2. That I have made use of Reason in this Treatise.

Answer.

offered Reasons, that is, Arguments against REASON, as it is a Faculty in us whereby we know; and have most evidently demonstrated that, as such, it is utterly incapable and unable to attain to any true, solid, living, real, and salutary Knowledge of Things Spiritual: This is manifest, and I freely own it. But that I understand or discovered those Arguments and Demonstrations by the Faculty of Reason, and by the Light of Nature alone, this is another Matter, another Question, which concerns no Body, and therefore ought to be left to my own Conscience and GOD alone. I know full well, that the supreme Spirit, which alone is capable of that Light, is, during its Exile and Continuance under this Bondage of Corruption, mingled together both with the Inward and Outward Senses and Imagination, as is, consequently, the Divine Understanding, with Reason. And Hence it comes, That as our superior Will is hindered and checked by the inferior; insomuch, that we have too too often Reason to say, *What I will, that I do not; and what I will not, that I do:* So like-
wile

The Conclusion.

wise Reason darkens our pure Understanding, and hinders it from perceiving the subtile Influences of Divine Light; so that when any Thing is to be said or written, it very often obtrudes and mixes Images formed by its own wonted and corrupted Activity, with Things of a very different and much more refined Nature. How far, or whether I have at all been guilty in this Respect, I most humbly submit to GOD, and to such as enjoy a greater Measure of Light than myself, to judge and determine. One Thing, if I know any Thing at all, I am sure of, That whatever true, lively, and salutary Knowledge I have attained to in Things Divine; It is not in any wise owing to my own Abilities, but solely to the Divine Goodness. *To Whom be all Honour and Glory for Ever and Ever!*

The CONCLUSION.

§. 434. But that no Body may have any just Cause to apprehend any Danger from what I have advanced, even upon that Account; I

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will

434.
By what
Means the
foregoing
Truths were
discovered.

will here faithfully declare by what Channels the LORD at first conveyed those clear, pure, and most desirable Waters of Truth into my Soul.

435.
Of M. Bou-
rignon's
Writings.
And who
are fit to
judge of
them.

§. 435. Such then, in the first Place; are the Divine Writings of that * Pious Virgin ANTONIA BOURIGNON: Which, whatever such as are blinded with Party Prejudice, or that disdainfully reject every Thing proposed by a Woman, can say to the contrary, contain in them such great Treasures of Divine Light, That, *If any Man will do the Will of Him, that of Old sent CHRIST, and now sends his Faithful Servant, not to say his Spouse, he shall, most easily, know of the Doctrine, whether it be of GOD, or whether she spoke and wrote of herself.*

436.
A Character
of her Writings,

§. 436. Whosoever will read those Writings with a free and unbiass'd Mind, and with a sincere Intention to do the Will of GOD according to

* As to what She has said of FAITH and the Divine LIGHT in particular; *vid.* The Funeral of *Ysaie Theology*, Part I. Epistle, xii. and Part III. Epistle, i. And also, The Light of the World, Part II. Conference xviii, &c.

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the best of his Knowledge; I assure him, nay, I confidently and sincerely assure him in the Presence of Almighty GOD, that he must and will confess with me, That Nothing can be said in more express Terms, with greater Clearness, and Plainness, or with more Force, or that can more truly and sensibly represent the present State of Christianity in the World; Or, that so clearly distinguishes Good from Evil, Truth from Falsehood, and Essentials from Accessories in all Sects; Or, that more evidently shews, the great Power of the Devil over the Children of Incredulity, and over the Elements of this World, and all the most subtle Snares that he lays for Men of good Dispositions; or that more accurately traces Self-love, through all its most secret Recesses; or that so happily and clearly unfolds the most profound Secrets of the Spiritual Life; and fortifies the Soul against all Temptations; or, finally, that can better teach us Christian Prudence, so necessary in these last Days; I say, he must and will acknowledge with me, that in all these Respects

The Conclusion.

Nothing can exceed those most Excellent and most Divine Writings. All which, I can vouch and justify upon my own Experience.

437
A Prejudice
of some good
Men, who
think that
her Writings
are not so
Profound
and Central,
because they
are Plain and
Simple,

§. 437. There may possibly be, even some good Men of another Opinion as to those Writings, who are of that Temper, that when any Thing is delivered with Clearness and Simplicity, so that the Unlearned, and even Women, may easily understand it, they can't prevail with themselves, to reckon it among the Things that are essential and profound; but only among such as are vulgar, superficial and elementary; but if any Thing be expressed in allegorical, obscure and uncommon Terms, they are then apt to look upon it as very profound and essential. And from such Prejudices as these, it may happen that this last Sort may, because of their Obscurity, be supposed to approach nearer the Center, and the others by reason of their Plainness and Simplicity, may, not without some Colour of Excuse, be looked upon as more approaching to the Periphery.

438.
We may
prefer those
Things to

§. 438. Surely, Whoever has a particular Esteem for some Books and

The Conclusion.

225

and Authors, as more profound and central than the Rest, and therefore on recommends them to others, because they best suited his own Taste, and most effectually contributed to inspire him with the Love of GOD, and with true Holiness; such a Person, surely, does not do amiss; for every One is bound to Love and Esteem such Means as he finds to be most agreeable to his own Disposition; provided he does not despise nor lessen the Credit of other Authors or Writings. GOD by various Ways and Instruments proposes his salutary Truth to Men, that so according to the various Constitution of their Minds, every One may find what is most agreeable to his own Taste and Condition, in order to dispose and allure him to seek and aspire after Divine Love.

thers, by
which we
profit most:

§. 439. But to judge of the Writings of others, as *such*, or of the inward State of any Author; or to determine what Degree of Grace or Perfection any One has arrived to, and to whom he ought to give Place, I say, to judge of those Things is dangerous, and

439.
But One
ough: not
absolutely or
compara-
tively to
judge of the
Writings of
others, or of
the State of
Authors,
with respect
to one ano-
ther.

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is prohibited by the * Apostles, and by our Lord Himself, to whom alone it belongeth to judge of such Things.

§. 440. It happens sometimes among those that disagree and differ in Opinion, that they do not rightly understand the Meaning of the Terms that they use, which they are not sufficiently aware of: Whereas, if in the first Place, they clearly understood, and were agreed as to the Meaning of certain Terms, it would perhaps appear, Either that the Disagreement between them, is not about the Thing itself, or that they ought to have expressed themselves otherwise.

§. 441. This I shall now endeavour to illustrate and explain, with Regard to the Subject in Hand: And in order thereunto, I will first examine, What is meant in Spirituals by the Center, and what by the Periphery: Which having done, it will be much easier to judge, when any Author or his Writings, may be said to approach to the Center, or to belong to the Periphery.

§. 442. But in doing this, I must first of all declare, That I have not

the

the least Thought nor Intention to make any Comparison between the many and most Illustrious Instruments of GOD's Wisdom; or to determine which of 'em was advanced to a higher Degree of Grace and Illumination than another. That indeed is the Province of GOD alone to determine. It will sufficiently answer all that I propose, if from such a Disquisition, we learn more safely and certainly to judge of the Depth of Spiritual Writings, and not readily to lessen one in Comparison of another.

§. 443. The first and innermost Thing that we can conceive of GOD Himself, is His Power of Willing, as has been already observed, (§. 67.) which is, as I may say, the Basis and *Primum Mobile* of the whole Divine Essence. And hence, this DIVINE WILL may properly enough be called the Center of the Deity: And if of the Deity, then surely, it is also the Center of all true Spirituality.

§. 444. Thus we see then, That the DIVINE WILL, is the One only most profound Center of all Spiritual Things whatsoever.

445.
Wherein
Nothing can
properly be
referred to
the Periphery.

446.
How in
GOD, the
Holy TRI-
NITY alone
is the Center;
and every
Thing else
may be ran-
ked under
the Denomi-
nation of the
Periphery.

446.
How in
GOD, the
Holy TRI-
NITY alone
is the Center;
and every
Thing else
may be ran-
ked under
the Denomi-
nation of the
Periphery.

§. 445. But seeing the Divine Essence, is in the strictest Sense One, and likewise Infinite, the allegorical Appellation of *Periphery*, which implies some Sort of Limitation, is what I scarce dare presume to attribute thereto. And hence, as I conceive, it was that the Antients said, That *GOD is an Infinite Circle, whose Center is ever-where, and Periphery no where.*

§. 446. But if any One will use this Term of the *Periphery* with Regard to GOD, it cannot be in any other sound Sense, but only as it may signify whatsoever does not directly and immediately belong to that Divine Substantial Will, not essentially enter into the Constitution and Form of the Supreme Beatitude thereof. And then, in this Sense, every Thing in the Divine Essence, except the Ever Blessed Trinity Itself; and more especially all the Ideas of Creatures, in as much as they are merely accessory with Respect to GOD, and the voluntary Productions of his own free Will, and which cannot of themselves add nor contribute any Thing to his Happiness: All these, I say, may by Way of Analogy be called the *Periphery* in GOD,

§. 447.

§. 447. But if we compare the Creatures themselves with GOD; then they and all that belongs to them, may be called the *Periphery* with Respect to GOD Himself, who is their only Center and Basis.

447. GOD alone the Center, and the Creatures the Periphery.

§. 448. And as to the Creatures themselves; that innermost and indelible Desire or Tendency to Good, and the Capacity of Enjoying the same, ought to be considered as the Center, and all their other Qualities, as the *Periphery*.

448. In the Creatures themselves what the Center, and what the Periphery?

§. 449. Hence GOD is rightly call'd the Center of Centers. Because, that seeing He Himself is the onely True Good, it is absolutely necessary, that He insinuate his own Goodness into the Center of every Creature, (seeing that it ought to have its Desire, and to attain the End of its Creation) in a Manner suitable to its Frame and Constitution, that so being fix'd there, it may again diffuse itself into their *Peripheries*, and thereby bless and adorn the whole Essence of the Creature.

449. GOD the Center of Centers.

§. 450. And seeing this Influx of the Divine Goodness into the Center of the Creature, In which consists all our Happiness, depends merely

450. Who may be said to be admitted nearer to, or at a greater di-

ly

ly upon the *Divine Will* (whence it is also called *Grace*). It is evident, That the more GOD bestows this Favour of *Divine Central Union*, or the more benevolent, (his Will alone being the most profound Center of Centers, §. 444. 449.) He is to any one, the more intimately is such a Person admitted, or the nearer does he approach to the Center: And on the contrary, the less any One is united to the *Divine Will*, and the less Grace he enjoys, the farther is he removed from the Center, the more is he bewildered in a larger *Periphery*.

451.
The true Rule to judge of this Union, without having recourse to Extraordinary and Sensible Means.

§. 451. Now here we must not measure nor form our Judgment as to the Degrees of such a central Union, from the frequent Sense of inward Sweetnesses and Delights, from *Visions* and other Revelations, tho' truly divine; nor from other extraordinary Gifts; but from Holiness alone, which consists in pure Charity, and Faith unfeigned, (*viz.* ordinary, naked and obscure, and not miraculous) and in the other * Gifts and † Fruits of the Holy Spirit; and likewise from the Eight || Bea-
titudes, and the * Marks of true Charity.

* Gal. ch. v. 22.

† Isa. xi. 2.

‡ Matth. v. 3.

§ 10.

* 1 Cor. xiii.

4---8.

The Conclusion.

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§ 452. This the Apostle teaches us in express Words. For after he had spoken of divers extraordinary Gifts, he then goes on, and exhorts his *Corinthians* to covet yet better Gifts: And yet I shew unto you a more EXCELLENT Way, says he, tho' I speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity; I am become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal. And tho' I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge: And tho' I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am Nothing. And tho' I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and tho' I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity it profiteth me Nothing, 1 Cor. ch. xii. 28—31. ch. xiii. 1—8. After all which, he shews us the Marks of CHARITY, least any One should deceive Himself in believing, that he has Charity, when he has it not.

452. *Confirmed and Illustrated by Sr. Paul.*

§ 453. The same Truth is likewise most evidently confirmed from the Doctrine and Example of CHRIST our Lord Himself. I presume no Body will be so mad as to deny, that CHRIST was admitted into the most Profound Center of the Divinity,

453. *And by CHRIST Himself, both by his Precepts,*

vinity, and that both in his Life, and by his Precepts, He hath set us the most compleat Pattern of true Perfection that we can ever hope for; and such, as it would be the most wicked Arrogance in us to desire to surpass. And yet his Visions, his Raptures, and the other Fruitions of his Inward Senses, are no where recorded, much less are they commended; nor are we required to do such Miracles as He did, or to understand deep Mysteries, But only to

* Matth. ch.
xi. 29, 30.

imitate his Divine Vertues: * *Take my Yoke upon you, says He, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart; and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls. For my Yoke is pleasant, and my Burden is light.* The same CHRIST

† Matth. ch.
v. 3---10.
| Ibid. ch.
v. 16.

has likewise told us, who are blessed in the Sight of GOD and of Himself †. He commanded, That our Light should so shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven ||.

Ver. 17.

He declares, That He came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets; but that whosoever shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven: But whosoever shall do, and teach

The Conclusion.

233

Ver. 19.

teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. He foretold us, That except our Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven *.

* Matth. ch. v. 20.

And wherein that more abundant Righteousness does consist, He most clearly shews in this and the two following Chapters; and then sums up the whole in that one most excellent Aphorism, the Reasonableness whereof the most Wicked cannot gainsay; Therefore all Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them: And least any should doubt whether this be the Sum and Substance of the whole, he adds,

For this is the Law and the Prophets †.

* Matth. ch.

Hence it appears, That the great

vii. 12.

End and Design in all these Things,

is to bring Men to || do the WILL of

1 John ch.

GOD always, in Imitation of CHRIST

iv. 34.

our Leader: For not every One, says

vi. 38.

|| he, that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter

viii. 28, 29.

into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he

that DOTH the WILL of my Father

which is in Heaven *.

* Matth. ch.

And to such

vii. 21.

as have not done so; he will profess

unto them, I never knew you, depart

Ib. ver. 23.

from me, ye that work Iniquity.

§. 454.

And by his
Example,
which the
Apostle con-
firms,

§ 454. This is PERFECTION, and this is the Way to it, which CHRIST taught, which He Himself first walked in, which He commanded us to pursue, and which leads directly to the most profound CENTER of all CENTERS. And whosoever would walk in this Way, must * Deny himself, take up his † Cross, and || Die to his own Will. For we shall not otherwise be joint Heirs with Christ, unless we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together*. For even hereunto are we called; To do well, to suffer for it, and take it patiently; because CHRIST also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his Steps ||. St. Paul in Consideration of these Things, counted all Things but loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus: For whom he suffered the loss of all Things, and counted them but ill Dung, that he might win CHRIST, and be found in him, not having his own Righteousness, which is of the Law; but that which is through the Faith of CHRIST, the Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith; that he might know him, and the Power of his Resurrection, and the Fellowship of

* Matth. ch. xvi. 24, 25.

† Gal. ch. v. 24.

|| Tim. ch. ii. 11, 12.

* Rom. ch. viii. 17.

|| 1 Pet. ch. ii. 20, 21.

of his Suffering, being made conformable ^{Phil. ch. iii. 8-10} unto his Death. That is, in order to live in a constant and uniform Obedience and Subjection to the Divine Will, it is absolutely necessary, that we first die in good earnest to our own Will: which cannot be done but through many * Tribulations, which must break and destroy it by peice-meal, ^{Acts ch. xiv. 22.} as I may say, until it be utterly extirpated and annihilated.

§. 455. Thus finally, is a Man transformed into that inward State of Spirit, in which CHRIST was, when he cry'd out upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,* Matth. xxvii. 46. Then does he arrive at the highest Perfection and Felicity of a Christian, and is so deeply immersed into the most Central Center, that he becomes one with it *: Which in reality is the most intimate Admission or Union that can be conceived. ^{455. By which alone we arrive at the most profound Center.}

§. 456. I suppose, no Body will deny, but that CHRIST upon the Cross, and especially at that Instant, when as to Sense, the FATHER forsok Him, gave a most illustrious Proof of Love and Faith towards GOD and Men; and that consequently, ^{456. And that indeed most perfectly, when all sensible Enjoyments are suspended.}

quently, He was then indeed most highly acceptable and well-pleasing to GOD, tho' he did not then perceive that most tender and inconceivable Love, wherewith the Father loved him: Therefore we cannot but conclude from thence, that every faithful Imitator of CHRIST in this State, approaches as near as possible to the same Degree of Divine Favour, and is admitted as far as possible into the true and essential Center of all Spirituality.

457.
This State
of Central
Union, fur-
ther confi-
dered.

§. 457. Let us then consider this most sublime State of Divine Union, yet more distinctly, and in a more general Manner, without that special Circumstance of the outward Cross. For the Inward State itself, is always one and the same; tho' the Circumstances with which it is surrounded may vary an infinite Number of Ways.

What it was
in the Fund
of CHRIST's
own Heart:

If therefore we more attentively consider the Fund of CHRIST'S Heart under that State of Dereliction upon the Cross, this appears to have been the most central and permanent Disposition thereof: *That being with the greatest Attention of Mind, and with the highest Complacency of Will, wholly, directly,*

directly, and unalterably fixed and intent upon G O D, as He is in Himself, above the Sense and Apprehension of every Creature, and consequently, in NAKED FAITH, it stood in the Midst of all its Calamities whatsoever, both inward and outward, unbroken and undaunted; and that in that NAKED and SIMPLE FAITH, it constantly rejoiced in the alone Good of its Beloved, and in the Infinite Perfections and Happiness, which He immutably possesses in Himself; and JOYFULLY depended upon his sole Will and Pleasure in all Things.

This then, is the highest Perfection of the Saints in this Life; this is the greatest Happiness they ought to wish for; namely, To have the supreme Spirit brought to such a Disposition. In order to which, neither deep Speculations, nor abstruse Mysteries, how true soever they may be in themselves, nor Prosperity, nor Lights, nor Raptures, nor Revelations, nor inward Sweetnesses, nor Miracles, nor any other Extraordinary Thing or Action, will do our Business: It must proceed solely from the real Possession of the Spirit of CHRIST; I say, of Christ Crucify'd;

And what it ought to be in the Saints in this Life.

Crucify'd ; of Christ strip'd of every Thing. Whosoever is not puffed up with any Sweetness, nor cast down with any Sort of Bitterness, but bears all Things with an equal Mind, and even glories with the Apostle in Tribulations ; Whosoever is glad that he is thought worthy to suffer any Thing with C H R I S T, and being mounted above all the Vicissitudes of the Creatures, has his Heart fixed upon G O D his Saviour alone, and perpetually adheres to his Will, either utterly forgetful, or at least perfectly indifferent as to all other Things : Such a Person, One may safely say, is acted by pure Love, and endued with a firm and lively Faith ; such a Person may justly be called truly perfect, and truly happy.

458.
That it undoubtedly
consists in
Naked Faith
and *Pure*
Love.

§. 458. This, surely, is what no Man, that sincerely and attentively considers the Matter, will presume to question. For who will not pronounce that Person happy, who, we are assured, leads a Life of perpetual Joy, being wholly exempted from all the Cares, the Concerns and the Vicissitudes of all created Things ? But where shall we look for, where shall we find this State of Inward Delight,

Delight, of perpetual and unchange-
 able Joy, "But in this Firm, Simple,
 and **NAKED FAITH**, and in this
 "PURE LOVE, which regards nei-
 ther itself, nor any Thing that be-
 longs to itself; but only its Beloved,
 and what belongs to Him: So that
 being raised above the Considerati-
 on of all Created Things, it solely
 adheres to GOD Himself as He is
 in Himself, surpassing all Sense of
 Pleasure and Pain, and infinitely
 above all Conception; in whom,
 as such, it rests, and in enjoying
 of whom as such, the supreme
 Free Will is most exceedingly de-
 lighted". Nothing, surely, can
 be conceived more sublime, Nothing
 can be more excellent in any Crea-
 ture, even in the Eternity of Happi-
 ness itself, than such a State. For,
 what can be more Noble, or more
 Extensive than this *FAITH*? What
 can be more pure, more generous, or
 more transcendent than this *LOVE*?
 Where else can we find such glorious
 Proofs of an invincible *PATIENCE*?
 Where shall we look for such a ready
 and so universal an *OBEDIENCE*?
 Where can we meet with any Thing
 comparable to this most profound
 Delight

HUMI-

HUMILITY? Finally, What can be so fully and so diametrically opposite to Corrupted Nature, as that total and utter Annihilation of every Thing that may be called our own?

459.
This is the
One Thing
Necessary,
which all
must endea-
vour after,
and which
may be ac-
quired here.

§. 459. Why then, to repeat again what can never be too often mentioned, why, I say, do we Differ and Quarrel with one another? Why don't we all own and agree in this? Why don't we incessantly and with all our Might aspire after this *One Thing Necessary*? 'Tis neither Wit nor Learning; but only a firm and fervent Will that GOD requires on our Part: Neither our Opinions, nor our Disputations, will do us any Service; but only good Works, and much Exercise, and continual Prayer, and a lively Faith in CHRIST, without which we can do Nothing; but through which, we can do all Things, *John* ch. xv. 5, 7. ch. xvi. 23. I say, *all Things*: *For all Things are possible to him that believeth*, *Mark* ch. ix. 23. And tho' this be impossible with Men; yet with GOD all Things are possible, *Matth.* ch. xix. 26. And our Saviour Himself, who surely knew best what is possible, and what is not, exhorts all his Followers,

lowers, *Be ye therefore PERFECT, even as your Father, which is in Heaven, is perfect*, Matth. ch. v. 48. Which is a most sure and certain Proof, that the Thing is not impossible to that Divine Grace, which he has purchased for us, provided we faithfully and constantly perform what on our part we are required to do.

§. 460. And thus have we clearly and distinctly shewn what the *Center* is, and what the *Periphery* in GOD and in the Creatures; what it is to be admitted into the Center; and what Sort of Persons they are whom GOD vouchsafes to think worthy of so great a Favour: Let us in the next Place, enquire into the Meaning of the same Terms, as they regard the *Life or Doctrine* of any Person.

460.
Of the Center and Periphery with Respect to the Life and Doctrine of any Person.

§. 461. And indeed, from what has been already said, 'tis evident, That the *Center* of all Spiritual Life and Doctrine, is Nothing else but that State of Perfection and divine Union, which we have described, §. 457. and which we ought to make the sole End and Design of all our Doctrines, and of all our Actions.

461.
The Center of Life and Doctrine, What?

On the other Hand, Under the Denomination of the *Periphery*, we

The Periphery of Life and Doctrine What?

M

may

The Conclusion.

may rank all the Occupations and Employments about the Creatures, on this side that State of Perfection.

462. Who is in a larger or lesser Periphery. §. 462. Whosoever therefore, being yet on this side that State of Union, occupies or busies himself about the Creatures, he stands in a lesser or larger Periphery, according as he is nearer to, or farther from the said State.

463. And who sticks and wanders therein. §. 463. And whosoever busies or employs himself about the Creatures, without any Regard to the said Center, he sticks in the Periphery; and the more Pleasure and Delight he takes in them, the farther he swerves from the said Center.

464. Who may be said to go most from the Periphery to the Center, and to lead others by their Doctrine to the same. §. 464. And that Person, whose Actions and Doctrines truly tend to draw the Heart of Man from the Creatures to GOD, and to an absolute Resignation and Dependance upon his divine Will alone; such a Person, I say, both advances from the Periphery towards the Center himself; and also points out the Way to others, how they may do so too; and the more immediately and powerfully such Actions and Doctrines conduce to beget and strengthen in us such an intimate Union with the Will of GOD, the

the shorter is the Way, and the more directly does it lead to the Center.

§. 465. That this Way, as to the Substance thereof, can consist in Nothing else, but in the mortification of our own Will, that so we may live to the Divine Will alone, we have already shewn, (§. 454.) Now in order to mortify our own Will, we are indispensably required to do these Three Things: (1) *To * Deny ourselves, and all created Things*, in so far as they are not included in the Will of GOD; (2) *To take up our † Cross*; that is, To suffer patiently, and to receive every Affliction coming from the Hand of GOD with Joy; (3) *To follow || CHRIST*; that is, To resign ourselves wholly and with all possible Assurance to his Will and Conduct. This is the Royal Gospel Road; This is the High-way that leads from the Periphery to the Center. By this Way, which consists in the inward Acts of the Will, viz. In withdrawing our Affections from the Creatures, and from ourselves; in sacrificing both to GOD, and embracing his Will in all Things; in resigning ourselves wholly into the Protection and Gui-

465.
The Way that leads to the Center pointed out in the Words of the Gospel, and contained in Three Words of CHRIST.

* Matth. ch. xvi. 24.

x. 37.
Luke ch. xiv. 26--33.

† Matth. ch. xvi. 24.
x. 38.

Luke ch. xiv. 27.

|| Matth. ch. xvi. 24.

Luke ch. xiv. 27.

dance of CHRIST in every Thing, how repugnant soever it be to Nature; in imploring his Grace, Light and Strength; and in the sincere and constant Practice of all these *inward Exercises*: By this Way, I say, we chiefly improve in Spiritual Perfection. For, seeing 'tis evident that from such a sincere, fervent, and continual *inward Exercise*, which cannot but be most acceptable to GOD, a *Habit* must at last arise and be formed in us; and seeing 'tis likewise evident, that such a *Habit* or inward Disposition must naturally influence and determine all our *outward* Actions in a Manner suitable and agreeable thereto; it manifestly follows, that such *inward Exercises*, lead directly to, and in a more especial Manner conduce to form and constitute the true Christian Life in us. To this Life or State, none that contents himself with the outward Acts of Mortification only, and neglects these inward Ones, can ever arrive; at least not without great Difficulty, and after much Time spent therein. And hence the Apostle expressly tells us, *That bodily Exercise profiteth little; but Godliness,* (which

(which is wholly INWARD) is profitable unto all Things, 1 Tim. ch. iv. 8.

§. 466. And thus have I shewn the Royal and Essential Road, which whosoever does not follow, he does but wander in the Dark, and can never be admitted into the Center. I have likewise shewn how we may go on happily, and make a Proficiency therein. Will you also have a Path? I'll shew you that likewise; even the shortest, the safest, the plainest, and the easiest; but which, is nevertheless very private and solitary, and scarce known to One of a Thousand: Such a One as, by a happy Compendium, abridges and reduces the Three above-mentioned necessary Duties into One; and in practising of which, we may in a very short Time run through the whole Course of Mortification. As it is the shortest, so is it likewise expressed in the fewest Words; viz. Two; STUDY ABSTRACTION. Study, that is, make it your Business to do so always, and without wearying, and to do that and Nothing else. Do you think that you profit Nothing thereby? That's Nothing to you. Let CHRIST take Care of

466.
Abstraction;
a Compendium of the
foresaid Doctrine.

(which)

M 3

That,

That; 'tis his Business, and not yours to advance you to higher Things. He knows Himself, when and how He will perform his Promise; but most assuredly He will do it. In the mean time, trust to, and continue in the Study of *Abstraction*, without so much as regarding your own Improvement therein, whether yo go forward or backward. *Abstract* only, *Abstract* and withdraw your *Mind*, your *Thoughts* and your *Affections*, and that continually from every Thing that is not GOD Himself in Himself, and his most Holy Will. Whensoever you find yourself cleaving to any Thing out of Him, **ABSTRACT:** And make it your sole Business, when or how often soever you cleave to any Thing besides GOD and his Will, as He is in Himself, to abstract and withdraw from the same. Abstract from Cares, from Solitude, from Fears, from Dangers, from Necessities, from Pains, from Joys, from Prosperity, from Adversity, from Parents, from Friends, from Sins, from Vertues, and finally, from Hell, and even from Heaven itself. *Abstract*; and in Case of a Relapse, abstract again. As many Abstracti-
ons

The Conclusion.

247

ons as you make, so many Steps shall you find yourself to have made towards the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. Abstract then, I say, Abstract.

But while you do abstract from every Thing that is not GOD, as He is in Himself, beware, least having no Object at all, you remain quite empty. This is a most dangerous Error. As therefore it is your Duty to Abstract and withdraw your Mind from all Things, so likewise, it is absolutely necessary, that you Convert and turn it wholly to GOD, as He is in Himself, that so He Himself alone and his Divine Will, may be the true and only Object of your *Thoughts*, of your *Love*, and of your *Faith*. By this Means it appears, that you may adhere to Him in naked, simple and abstracted Faith, and with the purest Love that can enter into the Heart of Man to conceive. Apply yourself then wholly to this alone Business; apply yourself to it with all Confidence, Diligence and Sincerity. Resign yourself wholly and in all Things to this GOD, as He is in Himself, and not as He is apprehended or perceived by you, or by any other Creature: And whatsoever

ver is, or may be wanting in you to compleat such an Abstraction and Resignation, make it up by an Union in naked Faith, with that most compleat Perfection, wherewith CHRIST wrought all Things: And He will at last most assuredly draw you wholly into Himself. Therefore, to speak in the * Language of *Johannes a Cruce*.

* *Vid. A-*
fens. Mont.
lib. 1. ch.
xiii.

“ In order to attain to the Knowledge of all Things, desire to know Nothing in any Thing.

“ In order to Taste all Things, desire to taste Nothing in any Thing.

“ In order to possess all Things, desire to possess Nothing in any Thing.

“ In order to arrive to be all Things, desire to be Nothing in any Thing.

“ And when you come to possess all Things, or the Whole, you must enjoy and possess it, *without willing any Thing*.

“ For, if you desire to have any Interest in the Whole itself, you have not your pure Treasure in GOD. In this Nakedness (and in this alone) the Spirit finds a true and solid Quiet and Refreshment.

“ For,

“ For, when it desires Nothing,
 “ Nothing can fatigue and raise it
 “ up higher ; Nothing can trouble
 “ and cast it down lower : It then
 “ rests in the Center, not only of
 “ Humility, but even of Annihilati-
 “ on. If it desire any Thing, such
 “ an Act cannot but in itself be
 “ tiresome to it. Wherefore Expe-
 “ rience will at last evince, That if
 “ you extirpate and annihilate your
 “ own Will, and desire Nothing,
 “ that then you will truly Possess all
 “ Things ”.

§. 467. Behold here, O Christian
 Soul, This is the great and only End
 which you must always have in
 view, if you would be admitted the
 shortest Way into the true and only
 Center of all Centers : Behold, I
 have shewn both the High-way, and
 the Private-path, which lead direct-
 ly thither ! Turn not aside, I pray,
 neither to the Right Hand, nor
 to the Left ; march forward as fast
 as possible ; and in your Journey
 hope in Him, who alone is your
 firm Support ; and, whilst you do
 hope, proceed.

467.
 This is the
 End, and the
 shortest way
 to the Cen-
 ter.

§. 468. Having thus fully and
 clearly explained, what the Center of
 Life

468.
 What Life or
 Doctrine is
 Central ?

Life and Doctrine is; and likewise shewn the High-way, and the Path, which lead both directly to it: It will from thence easily appear, what Life and what Doctrine, may be called *Central*.

469.

Of those that go from the *Center*, and wander in the *Periphery*.

By applying themselves to Arts and Sciences as such; altho' those that seek the Glory of GOD, and the Good of their Neighbour in them, and that do not reject the Cross of CHRIST, may some times, but with much Difficulty arrive at the *Center*.

§. 469. We will then in the next Place, more particularly Consider such as turning themselves from the *Center*, wander and stray from it, and are bewilder'd in the *Periphery*.

As to Arts and Sciences, which regard the Creatures *as such*, its evident, that they must be ranked under the Denomination of the *Periphery*, (§. 461. 463.) But if yet nevertheless, any Person apply himself to learn them, with a true and sincere Intention to use them to the Glory of GOD, and the real Good of his Neighbour, he (if furthermore he follow CHRIST, take up his Cross and deny himself) approaches indeed towards the *Center*; but for the most Part, through many Turnings and Windings, and at the Expence of much Time and Labour: So far are they from contributing in themselves to further him in his Way to the *Center*. For in order to make them subservient and conducive to this End, 'tis abso-

absolutely necessary, that a Man convert them into a Part of his Cross, that is, That he acknowledge them to be altogether vain and insignificant, and look upon them as a Part of his Miseries: That in this View, and upon this Account, he take them up *patiently*, as the Cross of CHRIST; and that he apply himself to the Study of 'em, not for the Sake of Pleasure, nor for the Sake of Glory, nor for the Sake of getting Money; nor to gratify his own Will, but only in Obedience, and in Submission to the Will of CHRIST: (Now the Will of CHRIST in this Case, must be collected from such Circumstances as these; *v.g.* If our Parents or Superiors will have it so; if the Condition, wherein any One is born, does not admit of another or better Way of Living, &c.) That so in the very Handling of them, he may deny himself, and consequently, truly mortify his own Will. *For whatsoever * does * Sect. 465. not oppose and destroy that Old Man, that does not only not contribute to Salvation, but is really an † Obstacle and † Sect. 454. Hindrance to it: For, from the Nature of Habits, 'tis evident, That every Moment that our own perverse Will*
is

is not weakened, it gathers Strength. How few, alas! propose such an End to themselves in their Studies? If the Reader ever chance to meet with such a Person, he may safely venture to say, That he hath found a Phoenix.

470.
And even by
the Study of
Theology, &
all our Mo-
dern Ortho-
doxy.

§. 470. But what's most to be wondred at, what's infinitely more to be lamented, is, That *Theology*, which professedly treats of GOD, of the Center, and of the Way that leads to it, is also in the same Circumstances and Condition. Even the most celebrated *Orthodoxy* itself, that Golden Ball of Contention, in so far as it treats and disputes about the true Ideas of Things Divine, *as such* (and not as it conduces to point out, and to assist us in pursuing our Journey in the * right and only Way to Salvation) is, like all other Sciences, Nothing else but the † *Periphery*. For seeing all such *Ideas*, are Nothing but the Modifications of our own Reason, and consequently meer Creatures; 'tis evident, that all the said *Orthodoxy* is wholly employed about them, and not about GOD, as He is in Himself. And while Men contend about such Things, as if it was for *Religion* and *Liberty*, they make their

* 465.
† *Self*. 461.
463.

Fol-

Followers turn round in a Circle, but never bring them nearer to the Center; yea, for the most Part, we may observe, that such conduct carries them farther from the Center; in as much as it inspires some with Hatred against others whom they are commanded to love; and puffs up many of its Votaries with an Opinion that they have attained to the highest Degrees of Divine Knowledge; when yet they are wholly void of all true and living Knowledge of GOD, and of Divine Things.

§. 471. Let us now apply all these Things to that faithful Servant of CHRIST, whom I proposed to speak of, viz. to that holy Virgin ANTONIA BOURIGNON, and consequently, to her Person, to her Life, and to her Doctrine.

471.
These Things apply'd to the Person above-mentioned.

To say, *That she was not let into the Center*, that is, that she did not attain to that inward State of Perfection, mention'd, §. 455, is what none will presume to do; unless he will venture to expose himself to the Hazard and Danger of Judging of Things, which GOD only can know; and which we are therefore expressly commanded not to meddle with.

A Central Epitome of her Life and Writing.

Or,

Or, to insinuate by such an Expression, that her Life was not like unto the Life of CHRIST; and that she did not propose that State of Perfection, as her only Aim, is what none that has any regard to Truth, and has read and considered her Life, will venture to do: A Life which every where abounds with great and illustrious Instances, of a transcendent Faith; of a most Pure and Seraphic Love; of a thorough Abnegation of all Things; of a most constant and compleat Resignation; of a most exemplary Patience; of a Mind undaunted under all Dangers and Tribulations. A Life, I say, which was continually imploy'd and dedicated to the Practice of all Sorts of Christian Vertues.

Much less can such a Phrase import, (without doing Violence to the Truth) that her Writings do not shew wherein the true Center of all Things does consist; nor point out the Way that it behoves us to take in order to go directly to it: For, almost in every Page of her Writings, she assures us, That an ABSOLUTE DEPENDANCE upon the Divine WILL in all Things was in Paradise,

dise, is now, and ever will be, the only *Necessary, Essential, Eternal and Unalterable* LAW. That all the other Precepts are Nothing else but so many Fatherly Admonitions given in order to shew us the Obstacles and the Means of returning and submitting ourselves to the same again. That this is the One Thing necessary; That there is no other Way to return thereto, but by the Way of Self-denyal, and of the Cross; That all Things are vain and foolish, which do not lead and dispose us to that; That all Things are good, in so far as they conduce thereto; That every Thing ought to be done with this Intention only, That the Will of GOD may be done; That our own Will cannot but be wholly and continually evil; That the Divine Will alone is in all Things ever and infinitely Good; That our Nature is wholly and universally corrupted, and ought therefore to be totally subdued and mortify'd; That we ought piously to Use, and not to Dispute about the Sacraments, and other Means, which GOD has prescribed in order to that very End, &c. She treats of Controversies, 'tis true, and

and moreover reveals many Myſteries; but not in, and for their own ſakes, and becauſe they are ſuch, or that corrupt Nature may, or ought to reſt and acquieſce in ſuch Knowledge: By no Means; But only in order to ſhew the Abufe, and the true Uſe of all Things, and to draw Men from empty Speculations, to lead a LIFE CONFORMABLE to that of CHRIST, as the only neceſſary and uſeful Doctrine; And that ſhe might by all Ways allure and win the Heart of Man to the LOVE of GOD alone, and inſpire it with Hatred againſt every Thing in ſo far as it oppoſes and contradicts that Love: And finally, That ſo ſhe might the more effectually; and by the ſhorteſt Way lead and conduct it from the *Periphery* of the Creatures to its GOD alone, who is the moſt *Central Center* of all Things. Now if any Body will refer ſuch Doctrines to the Periphery, he may by the ſame Rule, rank all the Doctrines of the Goſpel; under the ſame Denomination.

§ 472. Whoſoever therefore Conſiders the Matter aright, and underſtands and agrees in the Meaning of the Terms, cannot with any Colour of

472.
It cannot be ſaid, That ſhe ſtuck in the *Periphery*, or that

The Conclusion.

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of Reason say, *That she stuck in the Periphery; and was not admitted into the Center.*

she was not admitted into the Center.

§. 473. But tho' I thus vindicate, and commend this Author and her Writings; yet I would not have it thought, that I mean thereby, to depreciate the Labours, or despise the Lights of others; Far from it! Whatever comes from GOD, yea, whatever proceeds from a good Will, is most dear and acceptable to me. I have Read many Sublime and Divine Authors, and I hope, not without some Profit and Advantage to my self. But such as are above my Capacity, or are any otherwise disagreeable to my Genius, I Censure not, but leave them to GOD, considering with myself, That what is not Good to me, may be very Good to another; That Books are not written for me alone; and that it would be highly Unreasonable for me to make my Taste the Rule and Standard for any Body but myself. Such Books and Authors I prefer in my own Opinion, and such I recommend to others, whose Unction I have felt; and whose Excellency I know; that so they in like manner, may try whether

473.

Her Writings not commended with a design to depreciate the Labours and the Lights of others.

whether they be equally agreeable to them, and whether they can contribute to bring them back from the Periphery of the Creatures, into Which we are all most unhappily plunged, and restore and unite them again to the only Eternal and ever Blessed Center of all Things. And for the same Reason, and not out of any Inclination or Humour to Censure others, after these aforesaid Writings, I cannot but commend those written by Dr. P——ge, the greatest Part whereof are yet unpublished, which so highly extol the Divine Sufficiency, Immensity, Love and Excellency, and so plainly set forth all the marvellous Emanations and Creations of GOD, and give so august and so clear an Idea of 'em, that I am confident, the World has not to this Day, seen any Thing of the Kind, that can be compared to them. These, together with the Writings of some other Pious and Illuminated Writers, are like so many Clusters of Grapes brought back by those happy Spies out of the Land of Promise; They are as so many Samples of that Divine and Transcendent Love and Favour

your which is prepared us; and they are given in order to excite and encourage us to pursue our Journey with unwearied Diligence, until at last we arrive at the **CENTER** of Eternal Rest.

§. 474. And thus, Friendly Reader, ⁴⁷⁴ I have faithfully communicated and ^{The Conclu-} imparted to you some Things, which, I confess, have been very serviceable to myself. Make a good Use of 'em, and pray with me, That being admitted together into the most Profound **CENTER** of all Centers, we may Praise and Magnify his Holy Name for Ever and Ever.



FINIS.

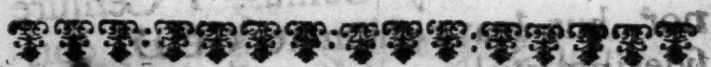
The Conclusion.

of Reason say. That the Luck in the
Periphery; and was not admitted into
the Center.



E R R A T A.

- P**age 8. line 8. for by (GOD) read (by
GOD)
18. Instead of Placing fig. 4. in the Mar-
gent against REASON, set it against S. 4.
24. for Theses read *Thesis*.
50. line 18. for speaks read *speak*.
52. line 1. for Extenal read *External*.
53. line 2. for Infinitely read *Intimately*.
61. line 14. Reasonble read *Reasonable*.
234. Marg. for Tim. read 2 *Tim*.



to they in like manner, may try
and whole Excellency I know; that
to other whole Question I have felt;
own Opinion, and such I recommend
Books and Authors I prefer in my
bard for any Body to tell. Such
make my Taste the more and more
be highly I think for me to
ten for me to do it would
to another, I think it is now
not good to me, may be very good
indeed, with myself. That which

